

THE HOME: A FIRESIDE MONTHLY.

MARCH, 1859.



ASPHODEL.

Draw aside the silken curtain,
Put away the window pane,
Let me feel the soft air blowing—
Let me hear the river flowing,
Out beyond the silent plain;
And the murmur of the willows,
To the water's gladder strain.

Let the perfume of the lily
Fill with sweetness all the air;
Let the roses in their glory
Tell the lover's thrilling story
To the aspen shivering there:
Rose and lily mate for duty
To the sorrowing everywhere.

Let me feel that She is near me
Who once walk'd this garden o'er:
On the air I hear her breathing!
In my hair her fingers wreathing!
'Tis her footstep on the floor,
Gliding to the solemn chamber
Seal'd with "*Gone!*" above the door.

Twilight deepens. Oh, ye wardens
 Of the heart's lone citadel,
 Bear me backward to that morning
 When youth challenged life's first warning—
 "Measure joy and sorrow well!"
 With a laugh whose ringing echoes
 Made the hills most musical.



The years loom'd up not grim and hoary,
 Heavy-lidded, mocking-eyed;
 Hills, whose beauty still must haunt me,
 Lifted up their jubilante
 Till the soul within me cried,
 "Child of fortune, Nature's creature,
 Here let fear be crucified!"

"Here," it cried, "shall I learn wisdom,
 Gather lore from Nature's store;
 Fields and flowers shall teach me beauty—
 Bee and bird shall teach me duty,
 And the river's shaded shore,
 With its murmur to the shadows,
 Teach me worship evermore."

Bear me onward, oh, stern wardens
Of life's solemn citadel,
Over years of fleeting pleasure—
Over seasons sow'd with treasure,
Precious more than words may tell—
Fold your pinions by the garden
Where I won her, Asphodel.



Won the morning-star of being,
Bade the evening-star arise,
Gave to life more joy and glory
Than was told in verse or story—
Sending to the bending skies
Flames of blisses, flash of passion
From our charmed, transfix'd eyes.

Glory lit the eastern heaven,
Stars and moon rose silently;
Side by side we watch'd the river—
Watch'd the stars and waters quiver,
Timing to the minstrelsy,
Waken'd by the ringing pulses
Beating Love's full reveille.

Sweep on, Time! My Asphodel
 Blent with life as all of it;
 Hope laid gifts upon Love's altar—
 Faith ne'er knew its prayer to falter—
 Not a shadow's shade might flit
 By the hearthstone of the dwelling
 Where our fire of Love was lit.

Precious months, by angels number'd!
 Bliss by the seasons spann'd!
 One in heart, and hope, and being,
 One in trust of the All-Seeing,
 How our vigils watch'd the Hand
 That was bearing freight of blessings
 Adding to our household band!

* * * * *

Close again the parted curtain,
 Shut away the pleading light;
 Sorrow leaps the height of blisses,
 Breaks the spell of Love's caresses,
 Blinds with tears the aching sight;
 Loved and lost! my sad soul echoes—
 Gone! it cries through all the night.

Asphodel sleeps in the kirk-yard—
 Wife and babe together laid:
 Far beyond the rushing river,
 Where the aspens sigh and shiver
 By the graves the years have made,
 My lone footsteps keep the trysting
 Nightly with the loved and dead.

NEW YORK, FEB. 10th, 1859.

R. E. M.



LITERATURE OF WEDDED LOVE.

AS we believe that the elements of high poetry exist wherever human hearts beat with true vital heat; and as we furthermore believe that the emotional and truly human life of a man and woman, so far from being over when, from lovers, they become husband and wife, then only begins to attain its full growth and capacity of bearing fruit and flower of perennial beauty and fragrance, we are tempted to inquire into some of the causes of this one-sidedness which we have charged the poet with, and to indicate briefly some of the real poetical capabilities of wedded love, and the sort of treatment they require in being wrought into actual poems.

The first and most obvious temptation to limit the poetical representation of love to the period before marriage, lies in the fact that this period seems spontaneously to supply that *beginning, middle, and end*, which narrative or dramatic poems are truly enough supposed to require. Courtship, in ordinary cases, divides itself into two phases, the termination of each of which is a point of definite interest, toward which all the incidents, all the talk, all the surprises, suspensions, difficulties, and triumphs, which make up the plot of a love-story, are directly subordinated. A man falls in love with a woman, and has to win his way by degrees, more or less rapid and eventful, to her affection; this is the first phase, rich, as experience proves, in elements of poetical pleasure, which all men and women are capable of enjoying without effort. Then follows the period, richer still in all the materials for varied incident, in which the social arrangements come in to interpose obstacles between the lover and his mistress, and to keep the interest of the reader or spectator always on the stretch. The advantage is beyond all computation, which this natural framework, made ready to his hand, confers upon the

poet who seeks mainly to amuse his audience by a series of connected occurrences, in each of which the least cultivated, the least thoughtful, the least generous, can take an interest that demands no strain, scarcely any activity, of the imagination, the heart, or the reason. And the free, vigorous exercise of the imagination is so rare among mankind, that it is little wonder that poets have been content with making their appeals to sympathies, that are sure to have been familiar to the hearts of their audience at some time or other in the actual experience of life, and need but the faintest outline of reality in the representation to awaken them again. But though it must be allowed that the love of husband and wife offers no such obvious and facile series of connected incidents, with well-marked divisions, and all tending, by due gradations of interest, to one event; and though in proportion as the interest of poetry is made to turn less on striking outward circumstances, a heavier demand is made upon the imagination of both writer and reader, and a mere passive reception of familiar thoughts and feelings becomes no longer sufficient for the enjoyment of the poem; yet this only amounts to saying, that poetry has some higher function than to amuse idle people, some nobler office in cultivating the heart, and enlarging the range of the inner life, than can be attributed to it so long as it merely strikes one chord of feeling, or at best plays over and over again, from the beginning of time to its close, the same old tune in different keys and on different instruments. It is, indeed, quite true that it would be impossible to mark the commencement of any poem, which should deal with ordinary wedded love as its main subject, by an event as definite as the first meeting of a man with his future mistress; or a feeling as definite, as distinct from his previous state of mind, as the first awakening of the passion that is to rule his life henceforward through the

story. The same remark applies forcibly to the want of any event equally definite with marriage to serve for a termination, unless all such poems were to have a mournful close, and end with a death-bed, or fall into the old tragic vein of seduction, adultery, and murder. We must candidly consent to give up that source of interest which lies in the changes produced upon the outward relation, upon the union or separation of outward existence between the two persons, whose inner relations, whose mutual influence upon each other, and affection toward each other are by supposition the subject of the poem. There can be no want of incident so long as character influences fortune, and fortune character; so long as the destinies of human beings in this world are carved out by their virtues and their vices; so long as wisdom and goodness sweeten the bitterest cup of adversity; so long as folly and wickedness infuse gall into the bowl of nectar which fortune hands her favorites in jeweled gold. It is the stupidity of poets which can see no incident in married life, so long as the marriage vow is kept to the letter, in the grossest interpretation of that letter; and which has for the most part induced them, when they have introduced married people at all, to use marriage to give a spicier piquancy to intrigue, or a darker glow to hatred and revenge.

But this notion of want of incident unfitting married love to be a subject for poetry, is closely connected with another notion still more false, vulgar, and immoral.

The romance of life is over, it is said, with marriage; nothing like marriage, is the congenial reply, for destroying illusions and nonsense. In which notable specimens of "the wisdom of many men expressed in the wit of one," there are two remarkable assertions involved. The first is, that love is an illusion; the second, that marriage destroys it. We may concede to the wisdom of the market-

place thus much of truth, that the love which marriage destroys, is unquestionably an illusion. We may also concede to it this further truth, that the love of husband and wife is no more the love of the man and woman in the days of their courtship, than the blossom of the peach is the peach, or the green shoots of corn that peep above the snows of February are the harvest that waves its broad billows of red and gold in the autumn sun. If, indeed, there are persons so silly as to dream, in their days of courtship, that life can be an Arcadian paradise, where caution, self-restraint, and self-denial are needless; where inexhaustible blisses fall like dew on human lilies that have only to be lovely; a world from the conception of which pain and imperfection, sin, discipline, and moral growth are excluded—marriage undoubtedly does destroy this illusion, as life would destroy it were marriage out of the question. If, too, attracted originally to each other by some slight and undefinable charm, by some chord of sympathy vibrating in harmony at a moment's accidental touch, often by the mere force of the tendency at a particular age to what the great Florentine calls—

*"Amor che al cor gentil rafto s'apprende,
Amor che a nullo amato amar perdona,"*

two young persons fancy that this subtle charm, this mysterious attraction, is endowed with eternal strength to stand the shocks of time, the temptations of fresh attractions, the more fatal because more continual sap of unresting egotism, ever active to throw down the outworks and undermine the citadel of love; and trusting to it alone, think that wedded happiness can be maintained without self-discipline, mutual esteem, and forbearance; without the charity which covers the defects it silently studies to remove; without the wisdom and the mutual understanding of character to which profound and patient love can alone attain—this is another illusion which marriage will destroy.

What is, however, generally meant by the sayings we have quoted, is, that there is nothing like marriage for taking the passion out of people, for taking out of them all disinterested aspirations, all noble hopes and fears, all delicacy of sentiment, all purity of mind, all warmth of heart—nothing like marriage for making them see, in respectable money-making, in respectable dinners, respectable furniture, carriages, and so forth, the be-all and the end-all of human existence. So far as marriage in our actual world realizes these noble predications—and, so far as it does, the result is mainly owing to the miserable views of life and its purposes which society instils into its youth of both sexes; being still, as in Plato's time, the sophist *par excellence*, of which all individual talking and writing sophists are but feeble copies—just so far is married love, if the phrase is to be so outrageously perverted, utterly unfitted for any high poetry; except a great master of tragedy should take in hand to render into language, the too common tragic-comedy of a human soul metamorphosing itself into a muck-worm. But surely every one can look round among his acquaintance, and find marriages that are not after this type, marriages which

“have wrought
Two spirits to one equal mind,
With blessings beyond hope or thought,
With blessings which no words can find.”

The romance of life gone! when with the humblest and most sordid cares of life are intimately associated the calm delights, the settled bliss of home; when upon duties, in themselves perhaps often wearisome and uninteresting, hang the prosperity and the happiness of wife and children; when there is no mean hope, because there is no hope in which regard for others does not largely mingle—no base fear, because suffering and distress can not affect self alone; when the selfishness which turns honest industry to greed, and noble ambition

to egotistical lust of power is exorcised; when life becomes a perpetual exercise of duties which are delights, and delights which are duties! Once romance meant chivalry; and the hero of romance was the man who did his knightly devoirs, and was true and loyal to God and his lady-love. If, with us, it has come to mean the sensual fancies of nerveless boys, and the sickly reveries of girls for whose higher faculties society can find no employment, it is only another instance in which the present is not so much wiser and grander than the past, as its flatterers are fond of imagining. To us it appears, that where the capacity for generous devotion, for manly courage, for steadfast faith and love exists, there exists the main element of romance; and that where the circumstances of life are most favorable for the development of these qualities in action, they are romantic circumstances, whether the person displaying them be, like Alton Locke, a tailor, or, like King Arthur, a man of stalwart arm and lordly presence. Nor do we see that the giants, dragons, and other monsters of the old romance, are in themselves one whit more interesting than the obstacles that beset the true modern knight in his struggles to perform manfully the duties of his life, and to carry out the noble spirit of that vow, which he has solemnly taken at the altar, to love, comfort, honor, and keep, in sickness and in health, the woman who has put her youth, her beauty, her life, and happiness into his hands.

It may, however, be said, that married life, when it is not utterly corrupted into crime and wretchedness—when, that is, it in any degree answers to its ideal—is necessarily monotonous; and that, though to be husband and wife, it may be a perpetual source of discipline and delight, it offers no scope to the poet, whose story must march, his characters develop, and their passions and affections exhibit change, gradation,

and culmination. We have already admitted so much of this objection, as to concede to the period before marriage greater facilities for marked gradation of interest depending on changes in the outward relations of the persons whose fortunes and feelings are being narrated. We have said, that those outward relations once fixed by marriage, the action of the poem which is to depict married love must lie within narrow limits, and that its interest must depend on more subtle delineation of shades of character and feeling, on a perception, in a word, of those effects which spring from the conduct of the affections in married life, and those influences which circumstance and character combine to work in the affections, and which, slight and common-place as some persons may choose to think them, are important enough to make human beings happy or miserable, and varied enough to account for all the differences that an observant eye can find in modern family life. And the fact, which few persons will dispute, that in our actual family life there is found, quite irrespective of distinctions of class and differences of wealth, every possible gradation of happiness and misery, of vulgarity and refinement, of folly and wisdom, of genial sense and fantastic absurdity, is a sufficient answer to those who talk of the monotony of married life as an objection to its fitness for yielding materials for poetry. In real truth, there is much more monotony in courtship than in marriage. A sort of spasmodic, and, to spectators well acquainted with the parties, a somewhat comical amiability is the general mask under which the genuine features of the character are hidden. Moreover, the ordinary interests of life become throughout that period comparatively insipid; and lovers are proverbially stupid and tiresome to every one but themselves. No doubt this has its compensating advantage for the poet, who transforms his readers into the lovers for

the time being; but it certainly gives monotony to all manifestations of the passion in this its spring-time, which is not found in the same passion when the character has removed from the first shock, and life, with all its interests, again enters into the heart, but invested with new charms and higher responsibilities, and with the deeper, fuller affections, swelling in a steady current through the pulses.

So much for those more obvious objections that may in great measure account for the almost universal rejection of married love as a theme for poetry. We do not care to argue against any one who says, much less any one who thinks, that it is only young men and women who are interesting. Even with respect to mere sensuous beauty, it is a great absurdity to suppose that its splendor and charm are confined to two or three years of early womanhood. "*Beaucoup de femmes de trente ans,*" says a shrewd French writer, after enumerating the supposed attractions of youth in women, "*ont conserve ces avantages; beaucoup de femmes de dix-huit ans ne les ont plus, ou ne les ont jamais eu.*" Certainly no Englishman who uses his eyes needs this assurance; and no one who delights in the society of women can doubt that they continue to grow in all that charms the heart and intellect, in all the materials of poetry, after they become wives and mothers.

There is, however, one solid objection to the tenor of our remarks, to which we are inclined to give great weight. We can fancy many persons, for whose opinions we have the highest respect, protesting against the intrusion of the poet into the recesses of married life, against the analysis of feelings that were not given us to amuse ourselves with, against

"Those who, setting wide the doors that bar
The secret bridal chambers of the heart,
Let in the day."

Literature was made for man, and not man for literature. There are, unquestionably, scenes which the

imagination had better leave alone, thoughts which should find no utterance in printed speech, feelings upon which the light and air can not dwell without tainting them. But without in the slightest degree trenching upon ground that should be sacred to silence, we conceive married life as one of the most powerful influences at work upon the character and happiness of individuals and of nations, to present capabilities of noble and beautiful poetry, that, so far from weakening the strength or vulgarizing the delicacy of domestic affection, would exalt and refine it. We see no reason for supposing that the conjugal relation would suffer in purity of spontaneous power by being passed through the alembic of a great poet's imagination. If it became the subject of morbid poetry or of weak maudlin poetry—supposing such a combination of terms allowable—the same result would follow as from the morbid or weak treatment of any other powerful human emotion—the poet would influence only weak and morbid people. Nor do we see that the danger is really so great of getting morbid, trashy, unhealthy poetry on this subject as on the more familiar subject of love before marriage. It would demand qualities of genius which in themselves are a strong guarantee—the power and the taste of delineating subtle shades of character and feeling, a perception of the action of character upon fortune, an insight into the working of practical life upon the affections, and their reaction upon it. Such topics are not to the taste, or within the capacity, of melodramatic or sensualized minds; and whatever good poetry was produced on the subject would, as all good poetry does, abide and work upon the highest class of minds, and go on ever spreading its wholesome influence, and giving the tares less and less room to grow. Our domestic life is not so uniformly beautiful as that it may not be profited by having its faults, its short-

comings, its miseries, brought into the full light of consciousness, as only poets can bring them; and bright pictures of what that life might be, what it sometimes is in actual experience, may surely do good as well as give pleasure. But we are not so much concerned to vindicate a large field of strictly ethical teaching for poetry as to open to her almost untried and certainly unhackneyed regions of beauty, pathos, and varied human interest; to bid her cease to stop at the threshold, and boldly, fearlessly, and reverently, penetrate into the inner shrine of love—cease to sing forever of the spring-green and the promise, and remember that love has its flush of Summer, and its glow of Autumn, and its Winter's lonely desolation.

One word before we close upon two special advantages to be anticipated from the habitual extension of poetical representation to married love. The subject, in the first place, interests mature men and women, who must feel, at the perpetual iteration of the first stage of passion in literature, much as if their bodily diet were confined to syllabub and sweetmeats. Poetry is comparatively little read by grown people who do not pretend to cultivate literature as a special study—mainly, we apprehend, because it confines itself to repeating, with a variety of circumstance, experiences which they have passed through, and of the partial and one-sided truth of which they have long ago been convinced by their more mature experience. A poetry which interpreted to them their own lives, which made them see in those lives elements of beauty and greatness, of pathos and peril, would win their attention, stimulate their interest, and refine their feelings, just as much as the same effects are produced by ordinary love-poetry on the young. We shall not argue the question whether the latter effect has been upon the whole for good or not; such an assumption lies at the root of all

discussion upon particular extensions of the poetic range. To us it appears indisputable that, along with some perils, the representation of any phase of human life by a man of genuine poetic power is a step toward improving that phase practically, as well as an enlargement of the range of that life which forms so important a part of a modern man's cultivation, the life he partakes by imaginative sympathy.

A second advantage which we should anticipate from the proposed extension would be the creation of a literature which would, in some important respects, rival and outweigh any real attraction which the properly styled "literature of prostitution" may have for any but *mauvais sujets*. It may shock some good and innocent people to be told that such literature is attractive to any but abandoned men and women. A statistical account of the perusal of the worst class of French novels by the educated classes of this Christian and highly moral country would probably be a startling revelation. One can only say off-hand, that a familiar acquaintance with this class of works is commonly displayed in society: and the reasons are not very recondite. These novels depict a certain kind of real life without reserve; there is flesh and blood in them; and though some of the attraction is due to the mere fact that they trench on forbidden ground, some to the fact that they stimulate tendencies strong enough in most men, and some to their revelations of scenes invested with the charm of a license happily not familiar to the actual experiences of the majority of their readers, there can be little question that one strong attraction they possess is due to their being neither simply sentimental nor simply ascetic. In accordance with an established maxim, which tells us that *corruptio optimi pessima est*, these books are almost inconceivably worthless, even from an artistic point of view, but the passions of these novels

are those of grown people, and not of babies or cherubim. We can conceive a pure poetry which should deal with the men and women of society in as fearless and unabashed a spirit, and which should beat this demon of the stews at his own magic—should snatch the wand from the hand of Comus, and reverse his mightiest spells; though, doubtless, this task belongs more to prose fiction, as the objectionable works are themselves prose fictions. In the poems we have already mentioned, this has been done. There is no reason why literature, or poetry in particular, should be dedicated *virginibus puerisque*; men and women want men's and women's poetry; the affections and the passions make up the poetic element of life, and no poetry will commend itself to men and women so strongly as that which deals with their own passions and affections.

HOPING.

BY CLARA AUGUSTA.

In beauty was the world brought forth,
From chaos, gloom, and night,
And peopled with irradiant forms,
And images of light!
Spann'd by the rivers, crystal clear,
Wash'd by health-breathing seas,
Perfumed by myriad dewy flowers,
Shaded by grand old trees,
And curtain'd by the golden light
Of Heaven's arch'd canopies.

Why sit me down in dubious thought,
Crushing all joy to tears?
Forcing down Love, and Hope, and Faith,
Through all the dismal years!
God did not form immortal minds
To grovel in the dust—
To waste high powers in sickly shade,
And leave the soul to rust!
But to look up, and tread down Fate,
Look up to Him, in trust.

Little's the credit we deserve,
Who fail to see the star
Which angels' hands have set on high,
To beacon us afar! •
But if we toil, trusting in Him
By whom this light is given,
We'll very likely gain on earth
Contentment's priceless leaven;—
But if this life rewards us not,
There's perfect life in heaven.

THE WRONG RIGHTED; OR, THE OLD HEART AND THE NEW.

BY METTA VICTORIA VICTOR.

CHAPTER IV.

To what gulfs,
A single deviation from the track
Of human duties, leads even those who claim
The homage of mankind as their born due,
And find it, till they forfeit it themselves.
BYRON.

God hath yoked to guilt
The pale tormentor—misery.
BRYANT.

IT was already twilight when Mrs. Livingstone returned from prayer-meeting to hear from Martha of the absence of Mr. Irving, and to look for her husband with some impatience, as she had a little wifely confidence to communicate with regard to some projects of the ladies of her church for forming a new society.

The dinner-hour came, and passed, without bringing Mr. Livingstone. The cook was provoked, for he had exercised his best skill upon the venison pasty and cranberry-sauce; and now the pasty was spoiling by the kitchen fire. At length he sent up word to that effect, and the clock striking seven, dinner was ordered upon the table. The mother and daughter sat down to a solitary repast—a very unusual thing in a family which almost always had visitors.

"I declare, mother, I have not had half the appetite I usually have," said Martha, as she trifled with the dessert. "Nothing is good without papa is here to enjoy it. I wonder what detains him!" The street-bell rang. "I believe that is him now," and she ran to see. "No! only this note from him for you, mother. Do open it, please, and let me hear."

"How vexatious, Martha, when I had so much to tell him! Detained by business, I suppose, and is so thoughtful as to let us know," and the haughty woman of the world reached out her jeweled hand, took the letter, indolently broke the seal, and began to read.

"Let us go into the library," she murmured, after glancing over a line

or two, and she left the dining-room, after motioning to the butler to clear the table without waiting for his master. "Here is news, Martha, and I was afraid of the prying eyes of the servants," she said, as she closed the door upon them. "Wait a moment, until I have read the letter."

She sank into an arm-chair, and was engaged for some time in perusing the two or three closely-written pages. Martha, who was watching her with anxiety, saw her grow deadly pale, as at its conclusion her parent dropped the letter into her lap with a groan.

"Oh, mother, what is it? Father is not ill—not dead?—for this is his own handwriting. What shall I do for you, mother? you look as if you were going to faint!"

"Be silent, and read the letter," whispered Mrs. Livingstone.

Martha obeyed; there was a mist before her eyes, but it cleared off, and every letter and word was plain and cold upon the paper:

"MY DEAREST WIFE:—It does not matter how I begin or end this communication. It is doomed to break your heart, and I can not soften the blow by any flourishes. God knows I pity you and our child. Prepare for the worst—nerve yourself to bear it—for there is nothing much worse than what I have to confess to you. For five years I have been a guilty man; and now, the consequences of my guilt are falling upon my head—not upon mine alone, or I could bear it. But to think of you, my proud wife, blushing with shame at my dishonor—to think of the pure cheek of my daughter pale with this disgrace—this it is that punishes me worse than the fiends of hell could otherwise punish. I have brooded over it until I am almost insane. For several years I have had an agent in Chicago for the purchase and sale of property there. Five years ago he wrote me of some real estate upon which there threatened to be an enormous rise, but other parties were after it, and bound to have it. I must send him the money, eighteen thousand dollars, immediately. I was living up to my income—indeed, a little more extravagantly than

was warrantable; and I did not like to ask the firm for a loan, as I knew they wished the money for use in their legitimate business. I could abstract the money from the bank in which I was a director, and it would not be known, and in the mean time, by the rise and sale of the real estate, I should be much more than able to replace it. I took the money, and sent it on. My agent effected the purchase, and was much gratified. He wrote frequently of such opportunities. My avarice was excited. The prospect of becoming rich so speedily, of acquiring an immense fortune with scarcely an effort, was tempting. I abstracted money whenever required. I heard of the rapid increase of value of my real estate. I was counseled to hold on to it, and I should become a millionaire. In the mean time, the certainty of future wealth led me into every indulgence. You know how we have lived. I have not hesitated to gratify your every wish—we have rioted in luxury. When my own income did not suffice, habit made it easy to dip my hand into the treasury. I will only say in my defense, that I firmly expected to return it all, with interest, before the deficit should be discovered. It was for the purpose of doing this, that I ordered my agent to dispose of some valuable property and send on to me the sum thus raised, when I found that the crisis was threatening to shake our firm. I knew that my partners would have a close and careful overhauling of books, to see where they were standing. I sent peremptory orders to Reynard to raise a hundred thousand dollars for me—about the amount of my deficit, I suppose. But the hard times were already upon us. Real estate did not sell. Money was not to be had at any sacrifice. There were no transactions—no exchange. I was in a close place. My partners were examining into accounts, and I trembled with the prospect of a detection, which before had never troubled me. Growing desperate, I wrote again to Reynard, and mortgaged my whole Chicago property to him, worth two hundred thousand, at least, for fifty thousand in gold, which he was to send me by a certain day. He raised the money by some means, and sent me. I emptied it into our vaults, and it saved us from suspension. Since then, we have been doing well, and I was waiting for something to turn up by which I might redeem my mortgage in the West, upon which my hopes of affluence hung. That Reynard is the evil spirit himself. Something in my anxiety and eagerness awakened his suspicions. He came on here, and by artifice and cunning incredible, he found how I stood. I am in his power. He threatens to betray me to the firm. You see how I am placed. I am still in debt to them, and can not now make up the deficit, while all my real estate is mortgaged to the man who is bent upon

my ruin. Of course, if he compasses my destruction, it will be to his benefit, for he will foreclose the mortgage, and be one hundred and fifty thousand dollars richer than he is. My property in this city will be seized upon by my creditors here. Thus, by the persecution of this scoundrel, I shall be beggared and disgraced, when, in a few weeks' time, I could have made all right, paid back the money abstracted, redeemed my property, and been in a flourishing business. It was to extort black-mail that he came here. But when he saw our beautiful child, he made *her* the prize which was to purchase his everlasting silence. If I would bestow upon him my daughter's hand, he would carry me through all difficulties, and make me a richer man than ever. He is himself wealthy; became so, I have no doubt, through guilt much blacker than mine. I need not say that I spurned to purchase my own safety at such an awful price. Better poverty, disgrace, and death, than to see her the wife of such a brute. The scorn with which I received his proposition, awakened all his malice. He swore he would make no other condition. The offer of all I had did not move him. He swore to see the officers of the firm this night, and lay my case before them. If I do not fly, I shall be arrested before morning. I have made up my mind to fly—not without a desperate struggle. I leave you to meet the disgrace alone; to hear my name associated with that of Schuyler and Huntington; to break the terrible news to my beloved child. Oh, if *that* misery could be spared me—if she, loving and innocent as she is, could believe me all that I have seemed, I could bear the rest. But I dare not talk of this. I have given you an account of what you will hear from harsher lips, that you may know what to expect. I knew that you and Martha had rather bear my disgrace, than that she should be offered up a living sacrifice to the cruelty of that man. I would much rather. Farewell. Break this news gently to our child. What good does it do to rave and beat my breast and forehead now? I am cold and calm; I do not think of home—of the past—or of the future. I have ten thousand dollars in gold with me. I go to a foreign land with this paltry sum. As soon as I can, with safety, I will let you know where I am, and ask you to come to me. Keep all your jewels and bring with you. They will serve to sustain you, until I can, sometime, perhaps, get something to do—perhaps repair my fortune, and repay my creditors. Our child may marry some wealthy foreigner, and forget in future happiness the calamity I have brought upon her youth. Merciful Heaven! I am trying to think of something to comfort you. Do not let this kill you. Kiss my child, ask her to forgive her unhappy father. When this is

received by you, I shall already be out of the city."

The letter fell from the girl's stiffened fingers, and she and her mother gazed at each other in the stupor of terror and amazement. After a moment, they threw themselves into each other's arms in a wild and hysterical outburst of sorrow. They did not know how to bear misfortune—and such misfortune as this!

"What shall we do?" cried Mrs. Livingstone.

"Oh, if Ralph were only here! There is no one—nothing will help us!"

"Why did he not take us with him? He has left us, Martha, to bear the weight of his disgrace."

"Disgrace! yes, mother, that is the bitterest of all! Poverty we could have borne, almost cheerfully—we would have hoped for better days—but now there are no better days! Oh, my father!"

The tone of shame, reproach, and bitterness with which these words were spoken, would surely have been punishment to the foolish man, who, for the sake of indulging to the excess of luxury the family of which he was so proud, now had placed them in this terrible situation. He sought to plant them before all others, and he had, indeed, but as targets for pity and ridicule, for these would, doubtless, be the most the innocent sufferers would receive from exulting competitors in the race after the prize they had lost. Mrs. Livingstone knew enough of the world to realize this. She paced the floor in a distracted manner, calling down merciless reproaches upon the head of her husband. The sin, in her eyes, was not so bad as the consequences. She forgot, that, by her ambitious extravagance, she had contributed much to his temptation.

"Yes, Martha, you may be sure we shall not be spared one drop that malice and uncharitableness can distill into our cup. We have been envied, now we shall be despised. Our

friends will be eager to make the most of this. The worst of it is, we will be left poor as well as disgraced. No matter what infamy your father had perpetrated, had he been *successful* in it, it would have been overlooked. But to *fail*—that is another matter. There will be plenty of righteous indignation now! Think not that you will see Dick Doolittle, or one of his tribe again. Think not that you will receive assistance or sympathy from one of the circle of which you have been the idol. My poor child, I know how you will be treated," and looking into the pale and troubled face of her child, she wept afresh.

"I expect the girls will treat me coldly, the most of them; they are a sneering kind of a set, anyhow. But, surely, mother, we have plenty of warm friends, who will help us all they can. Not that I care, for we can never be happy again. Oh, I wish that Ralph were here to give us some advice!"

"I did not think Endicott Livingstone would make such an idiot of himself," burst forth his wife, ceasing to wring her hands, as a feeling of indignation for a time checked other emotion.

"I wish I were dead!" added Martha. "I do not want to live! How can we face our acquaintances, mother? I wish to-morrow would never come!"

"I think if we had all committed suicide together, it would have been as well."

"Mother! mother! what shall we do?"

"Let me tell you what to do," said a voice at the door.

They looked, and beheld Jacob Reynard. Admitted by a servant to the hall, he remarked to him that he would find his own way to the library, as the ladies expected him. He now came in, and carefully closed the door.

"Do not speak so loud," said he; "walls have ears, and we do not want these to betray us. Let me tell

you what to do, sweet Martha. Save your father, your mother, yourself—restore your parents to more unbounded prosperity than before. I have not yet breathed your father's secret to a living soul. I am rich. Accept my hand, and I will not only release every mortgage which I hold upon his property, but I will make up the amount deficient in his bank account, and leave him at the top of the heap. Think on it, Miss Martha, *you* have the power in your own hands."

The young girl stood listening and shuddering. Her mother looked from one to the other.

"Perhaps you think it is out of the frying-pan into the fire," remarked their visitor, with a leer. "But, really now, I have too good an opinion of myself to look on it in so bad a light. I am not young, nor *very* handsome; but I have money enough to cover a ten-acre lot; I'm a good disposition to those I like, and I swear I like Martha Livingstone the best of any of man or woman kind I ever saw yet. Say you'll have me, chick, and neither your father or mother shall ever want for money to spend while I live. And you shall have a silver wedding-dress, live where you please and as you please—walk upon gold, if you wish. P'raps your afraid your genteel friends will make fun of me—but Lord, they never yet made fun of a fellow who could jingle as much change as I! You'll see how glad they'll be to come to the wedding. Come, answer me, my dear, for time is precious!"

Not a word did the girl utter, even of refusal. She only gazed in her mother's face, who was looking eagerly at her. Alas! she saw that her mother wavered, that she shrank from the terrible ordeal before her, and would fain shelter herself from it, even in the unhappiness of her child.

"Do not look at me so, mother; I can not bear it!" she whispered.

"But your victim is already fled—he is beyond recall," said Mrs. Liv-

ingstone, turning from the anguished countenance of the young girl.

"I know where he is. I have kept track of him, and could set the officers of justice on him yet, if I choose. There's a vessel sails from Boston to the Mediterranean seas, to-morrow, and in that vessel your husband intends taking passage, thinking that search will be made in other directions. I can send officers after him by the night train. Shall I do it?"

"If you really loved me, you would be merciful to me and to those I love," answered Martha, at last. "Oh, Mr. Reynard, do not be so cruel! Save my father, and I will bless you forever!"

"I don't want your blessing," he muttered, gazing upon the face uplifted in entreaty, which might have moved a stone, for she had thrown herself upon her knees in the desperation of her pleading. "I want *you*. I've got houses and lands, and a pocket full of rocks, and now I want a young wife to help me enjoy them. There's no use in your coaxing. It only makes you prettier. From the moment I set my eyes on you, I resolved to get you if I could, and I would be a fool now to give up the chance. You have the choice set plainly before you—either to promise to marry me a week from to-night, or to see your father in prison to-morrow."

"Oh, Martha, this is dreadful! worse than we feared even. Your father arrested—brought to trial—jeered at in the court-room—found guilty—"

"What would you have me do?" asked the girl, still upon her knees.

"The Lord knows, I do not," groaned Mrs. Livingstone. "I shall not seek to influence you. Let your own heart answer. I shall die, anyhow. I feel that I never can recover from this shock."

"If we only *could* die, and be at rest," sighed Martha. "But, dear mother, I will make an effort to save us all. I will go to the directors, and

throw myself upon their mercy. I will plead my father's cause—tell them the temptation, and the intended repayments—beg of them for your sake, for mine, to be generous, and not expose his fault to the public."

"Great good that will do you, miss. I have the power to expose him; let the directors do as they choose; and I will proclaim his shame at the street-corners. 'Pride must have a fall.' Make me mad, and you'll find I'm not to be trifled with; be kind, and you'll see how much I will do to humor you. Set the wedding-day, and I post off to-night to bring back your father; and all things will be as they were before."

"My father himself would not ask it of me," whispered Martha.

"He loved you too much. You are not willing to make as great a sacrifice for him; if you were, you would not hesitate, choosing a prison for him, rather than an uncongenial match—"

"Mother! mother! do not say any more. You shall not lay your ruin or death to me, whatever comes."

"I believe I am beside myself, Martha;—do not mind me."

"Whatever comes of my decision, go, Mr. Reynard, and recall my father; let me see him restored to all that was his, and you may claim whatever wedding-day you choose. Tell him it was my free choice, and that he need not refuse it. Go, instantly!"

"There, that's sensible! I thought you'd come round at last. It'll all be right now; and you won't find me such a scarecrow after all. There's lots of girls will envy your fine feathers, chick. But I'll not bother you any more this evening. I'm off to Boston to bring back the governor, and straighten out things. Expect to see us to-morrow. Hope to find you looking bright on our return. You shall have a set of diamonds, my duck." He bowed himself out as smilingly as if he had been the most agreeable person in the world.

"You are our savior, my daughter," said Mrs. Livingstone, endeavoring to comfort the victim, who sat upon the floor with her face buried in the cushions of the sofa. "After all, it may be that he will make a tolerable—"

"Do not say any thing to me to-night, dear mother. Let the matter rest; we can not make it better or worse. Why did Ralph Irving go away to-day? Perhaps, if he had been here, he might have done something for us. It is fate—all fate!"

CHAPTER V.

"Thou art like night, O sickness! deeply stilling,
Within my heart, the world's disturbing sound,
And the dim quiet of my chamber filling
With low, sweet voices by life's tumult drown'd;
Thou art like awful night! thou gatherest round
The things that are unseen, though close they lie,
And with a truth clear, startling, and profound,
Giv'st their dread presence to our mental eye."

MRS. HEMANS.

UPON the afternoon of the next day Mr. Livingstone arrived home. The humiliating emotions of shame and regret with which this proud and self-loving man met the family which he had rendered unhappy, need not be dissected. "The way of the transgressor is hard;" and probably he would have thought that the mountains falling upon him and crushing him, would be a relief, if they could but hide his guilt from those whose nearness and dearness made their knowledge of it the more unbearable. He knew that his wife would find some crevasse of reproach through which the swollen waters of grief might seek their level; but, much as he dreaded her outbursts of sorrow, and the more stinging silence of the haughty manner she knew so well how to put on, he shrunk most from the pale face and suffering expression of his daughter. When he entered the room where they awaited him, his wife gave him her hand coldly, hiding her tear-stained face in her handkerchief; but when he turned, with that troubled, entreating look,

to Martha, she flung herself into his arms, and kissed him.

"You still love me, then?" he whispered.

"If I did not love you, I should not have sent for you, father. It was not to save myself, for I would prefer—" here she hesitated, loth to pain him any more by an avowal of the terrible repugnance she felt to keep the promise which had been extorted from her. "Mother, father," she continued, with a solemnity of manner new to her, "I want to see you friends," and she placed their hands together. "And I wish no reference ever made to the why or wherefore of what is coming. Since all is forgiven, 'let the dead past bury its dead.'"

And "the dead past buried its dead," except that its ghost was ever present, peering out from the haggard face of Mr. Livingstone, laughing hollowly through his soft laugh; shadowing the handsome face of the mother, as if there were a black veil over it; and hanging the white livery of the shroud upon the whilom roses of Martha's cheeks. Each knew of the presence of the ghost, but no one spoke of it. Servants and guests felt its mysterious presence, but could give no "local habitation and no name" to their surmises.

In the mean time, preparations for the wedding went on. Christmas morning was the time set for the ceremony, seven days from the one of Mr. Livingstone's return. Of course, not much preparation could be made. No guests were to be invited, except two or three intimate friends. Mr. Reynard haunted the house a great deal. Every time he came, he had some costly present for his intended bride; now a diamond brooch, now an opal necklace, or other trinkets, which he doubtless thought must purchase her happiness.

"The fair sect is mightily taken with such things," he mused, as he spent hundreds of dollars on a single gift, which he vainly hoped might call a smile into the fixed, sad eyes, whose

downcast looks were but seldom raised to his own. "She's a splendid woman, and she shall be splendidly fixed up! Folks may laugh at me behind my back, but they'll envy me my wife, as well as my money. Jacob Reynard, you're a fortunate man, and you owe it all to yourself!"

Jacob Reynard did not look to the settlement of his last accounts when he esteemed himself so rich a man; he did not see the bankruptcy which stared him in the face when he should attempt to do business in that "spiritual world to which we are already entered." He did not see, and he did not care. Conscience-hardened, his soul was dwarfed to such small proportions, he was seldom reminded that he possessed one at all. "Money makes the mare go," was his elegant and appropriate motto; he probably never queried whether she would carry him to the gates of heaven or hell.

In the presence of the bridegroom elect, Martha seemed more like a deaf and dumb girl, than a youthful being, sentient with hope and joy. She made efforts to adopt a manner more becoming to the relation she was so soon to assume, but words would not come, smiles would not do her bidding. The apathetic "yes," and "no," the listless acceptance of formal attentions were all he could gain for the present comfort of his passion.

In the presence of company she was unusually gay. A critical eye would have detected the feverish character of her mirth, the cheek which was hot and red, the eye which was dry and glittering. She displayed her costly presents, to such of her friends as chanced to call, with an avaricious demand upon their admiration, quite different from her usual dainty reserve.

It may be, that, for a few moments at a time, she persuaded herself these were the chief objects of existence, and that, after all, she was making a brilliant match. They

certainly very much reconciled her mother to the turn affairs had taken. She feared, and she regretted; but she had not the moral courage to face the tempest of public contempt, and thus silently permitted the lamb to be made ready for the sacrifice, without attempting to interfere. Of two evils, this was to her the least.

The bride and bridegroom (oh, hateful words! what a thrill of horror they sent along the electric nerves which should have trembled with pleasure at the sound!) were to leave, immediately after the ceremony, for a brief journey South, and were to be accompanied, at Martha's request, as far as Washington, by her parents. To be torn so suddenly from them, and given into the keeping of this repugnant stranger—the thought was desperation and despair. As much as she could, she put it from her, keeping her hands busy, and thus trying to divert her mind. When Christmas-eve arrived, the trunks were packed and standing ready, and, as Martha saw them, strapped and locked, fate seemed to grasp her with an iron hand—they were one of those rude, palpable proofs of the direction her destiny was taking, which brought it more vividly to her comprehension than any other thing had done.

It was Christmas-eve. What a long time seemed to have passed since that night one year ago. Then, she was young and happy; she went with her mother to behold illuminated churches, to bow before decorated altars, and to join her clear voice with the mighty gladness of the organ in a hymn of praise. Now, she was old—a hopeless old woman at heart (so she thought)—with only the ashes and chill of life about her. She heard the bells chiming, as an exile hears, in dreams, the chimes of the village church at home.

Well, after all, it was not so very bad! Most any of the girls she knew would be glad of a chance to renew the story of Beauty and the Beast, when there three' were hundred thou-

sand dollars to be made by it. Didn't that intimate friend of her mother's, Mrs. Sinclair, tell her, with an encouraging smile, that "it was better to be an old man's darling than a young man's slave." And, perhaps, she knew. Her own mother, and almost everybody she knew, except Mr. Irving, thought more of appearances than of realities. Many of the married people she had observed, were mismated, and treated each other with polite indifference, yet they seemed by no means unhappy. Each had his or her own interests and ambitions, and could afford to let the other alone. To be richest, handsomest, best-dressed, and gayest—was that not worth living for? She knew more than one girl who would envy her—even with that incumbrance which she must take with her good fortune.

No doubt, either of the Misses Doolittle, who were Martha's particular friends, would have thus consoled herself. No doubt, her own mother hoped that she would find such consolation. But Martha was not quite so much of a lay-figure for the proper display of the *modes*, as she might have been—perhaps owing to the doctrines and example of Ralph Irving, more than to any other salutary influence. Her Christmas-eve was not one of joy or expectancy. To her fastidious eyes, the vulgarities and ignorances of Mr. Reynard were worse than his vices. Sensitive and refined, she shrunk from the ridicule which she knew would be secretly, if not openly, perpetrated. She felt that the blaze of diamonds even, could not extinguish his glaring deficiencies. Amid wilder thoughts, there obtruded itself the fancy of Dick Doolittle congratulating her upon her marriage. She could see the malicious laugh lurking behind his elegant compliments, and, strange though it be, she dreaded his delicate satire more than many more serious evils.

"It is the intensest vanity alone
That makes us bear with life,"

says Festus; and certain it is that ridicule is a more effective weapon than even policy itself. Martha had the vanity and the sensitiveness of youth. She doubted the transfiguring power of gold being able to hide the defects of her future husband; she had not yet gained the *ne plus ultra* of fashionable training, when the cheek can no longer be made to redden with shame or modesty. With hidden despair gnawing her heart, she went to her chamber Christmas-eve.

"I do not like to disturb you, my darling," said her mother, coming into her room upon Christmas morning, "but it is getting late. The ceremony is to take place at ten o'clock, and it is now a little after eight."

"Is it so near the time, mother? I have tried to rise several times, but can not—I get dizzy. I do not know what is the matter with me. I think if Annette would help me to get upon my feet, perhaps I should get over this, and be able to dress."

"Let me assist you," said her mother, alarmed at the expression of her eyes, which were heavy and languid. She took hold of the burning hands, and raised her up.

"My dress, mother—my wedding-dress!"

"I believe you are very ill, my child!"

She might well believe so, for, at that moment, Martha sank back upon the bed. With the effort to rise, she had fainted, or rather, sank into the unconsciousness of fever. Her nervous system had been over-tasked, and had given way beneath the ruthless press of coming events.

Within two hours it was fully apparent that there would be no marriage upon that day. The services were postponed, and the family physician called to take their place.

Jacob Reynard was pacing the parlors like a baffled animal. He was very suspicious of some plot, and insisted upon seeing his sick bride. Mr. and Mrs. Livingstone were not only alarmed for their daughter, but

afraid of the anger of their tormentor. He was admitted to her chamber, and had the evidence of his senses that she was really very ill.

"What do you think of her?" he asked the physician.

"I think that a week or two of perfect mental and physical quiet will restore her. She has never been ill, and has a most excellent constitution. But I insist upon perfect rest. Submit to your disappointment, Mr. Reynard, and do not attempt to hasten her convalescence, if you would claim your bride this winter."

A week or two was an age to this man's impatience; but, as there was no gainsaying the decrees of sickness, he was obliged to submit. He could not exactly blame Martha or her parents for her illness; it was not very flattering to himself to guess that horror and dislike had thus affected his future wife; but, as she had shown no disposition to break her promise, he knew very well that *she* was the last person at fault in the matter.

That same evening Martha came out of the semi-unconscious state in which she had remained all day. Turning her eyes to ascertain that there were no others present in the room, except her parents, who were sitting near, regarding her, she whispered to her father. He approached, and bent his ear to her lips.

"God has granted us this respite, father, to give you a chance to redeem yourself. Work speedily and secretly. Take all my costly trinkets, mother's jewels, sell your carriage, borrow of your friends, raise enough money to redeem your honor at the bank,—then, if the stroke comes, it can not harm you much. You will be poorer, but so much happier. It will save me, too! I have been thinking about it all day, when you supposed me insensible to every thing. Be cautious!"

These words came like a glow of light to the darkened heart and conscience of Mr. Livingstone. He had suffered so much in contemplating

the fate of his beautiful and idolized child, that poverty no longer had the terror for him which it once had. Appearances were no longer his Lares and Penates. He would have two or three weeks in which to make efforts to cover his deficit; if he succeeded in that, the loss of his Chicago property would be a cheap getting out of his difficulties. He would refuse his daughter to his persecutor, and if he threatened him with exposure, he would defy him. He might shake the confidence of his partners in him, and cause people to talk about him in the streets, but he could prove nothing worse than that he made every effort, even to the sacrifice of his accustomed home luxuries, to replace money which he borrowed in a flush hour and repayed in a dull one.

"It shall be as you say, Martha, if I can make it so. Dear child, if I can but spare you—and *I will!*"

Martha saw the air with which he lifted up his head as he said this; there was hope and determination in it, and she was content. She pressed his hand, and repeated her warning to be cautious, for the sharp eyes of a practiced rogue were upon his every movement. "Desperate evils require desperate remedies," and neither Mr. Livingstone, nor Martha, unused to deception as she was, thought it wrong to maintain such a manner toward Mr. Reynard as should beguile his suspicions.

When he came in, a few moments later, Martha allowed him to hold her feverish hand, and repaid his anxious hopes that she was better—would soon be well—with a faint smile. That smile almost reconciled him to a temporary delay, for it was the first smile he had ever received from her.

A low fever, not exactly dangerous, but very prostrating, followed upon the first attack. The doctor would permit no visitors, except the bridegroom elect, who was allowed a half hour every morning and evening, to sit by her bedside. Many long hours

of the day and night for the ensuing fortnight were passed by the sick girl in silence and darkness, outwardly; lying in a dim chamber, with the nurse, upon whom she made but few requirements, asleep in her easy chair—silent and still she lay, but her mind was preternaturally active. Excited by fever to unusual quickness, it created a world of its own, and lived a life in those two weeks. Traits which had lain dormant, quickened, and sprang into existence. Truths which had fallen into her heart in careless moments, and sank out of sight, now revealed to her the intrinsic value of their brightness—pearls of great price, which had been trodden down by a thoughtless, girlish foot. One thing she had learned, which she could not easily forget—the instability of worldly prosperity. If any one had hinted at reverses a month ago, she could hardly have realized that misfortune was a possible thing for *her*; love, hope, praise, beauty, luxury, idleness, freedom had always been hers, as thrones belong to queens; yet, suddenly, as the thunderbolt strikes the fairest tree in the forest, a blight had fallen upon her. She had stared shame, disgrace, and poverty in the face; ay, and they were still hunting her, kept at bay for a season only, it might be.

More than this, worse than this, her confidence in humanity had been shaken—in professed and apparent good, which hitherto she had accepted unquestioned. Her father had been to her the embodiment of manhood. Regarding his fault with all the generous excuses of her ready love, she still saw that, at least, hypocrisy must have been practiced, for she had heard him declaim against those indiscretions in others of which he was at the time himself guilty. Neither could she entirely free her beloved mother from the sin of selfishness, in the part taken in late matters. She saw that her position in society, the daily indulgence in accustomed ease, were dearer to her than any nice

drawn line of principle. Church-member and exemplary woman, she was not one to follow in the footsteps of Christ, and die for the truth rather than forsake it.

Doubt and despondency took possession of the girl's mind. Trouble had come upon her, and she had no weapons with which to meet it; endurance she had not learned; faith had never been awakened; a firm reliance upon the ultimate goodness and ability of God to support her in sorrow, and turn a crown of thorns into the roses of joy, she had not yet attained—neither had she seen it developed in the characters of either of her parents, in the time of need.

She esteemed it very cruel not to be permitted to be happy in her own way; she murmured at fate for robbing her of her birthright; she did not wish to be resigned to any thing so unjust. What had she done thus to be thwarted in her youthful hopes? She did not care to reconcile herself to any thing so preposterous. The sickness of her mind was more dangerous than that of her body. She would have thanked God, she thought, to have taken her life at once, and not have afflicted her thus. This was the first phase of her mind when left to its solitary meditations. In bitterness of spirit, she cried to her Father in heaven, like a wayward and petted child, to take her life, for her punishment was more than she could bear. If she was to be vexed, and tried, and troubled, and disappointed through all her earthly career, she would acknowledge at once that she had neither strength nor will, and pray to be removed from the petty conflict.

During the darkest period of her sorrow, her father was exerting himself to the utmost to get rid of his embarrassments. His heart revolted, more than ever, at the thought of his child becoming the wife of that vulgar and purse-proud villain. Wife! would she ever be his wife in the eyes of the angels of heaven? no,

only an unhappy victim, sacrificed to lust upon the altar of family pride. Every day such sacrifices are made; they are legal; therefore they can not be criminal. Sometimes Mr. Livingstone hoped that he should arrange all things satisfactorily; but many circumstances were against him; especially, that he could take no step to dispose of any property or to borrow any money, except in the most secret manner. His wife had given up her jewels, and expressed a reluctant compliance in any arrangement which he should see fit to make.

(To be continued.)

A SONG.

TO MY WIFE AT HOME.

WHEN a stranger 'mid strangers I roam, love,
And no friendly face can I see—
When affection doth link every step, love,
That lengthens between you and me—
The light of thine eye, love,
The light of thine eye,
Illumines the mansions within, love,
The light of thine eye.

When storms o'er the mountains advance,
love,
And terrors ride madly the blast,
A pilgrim I wander alone, love,
And shrink from the winds rushing past—

When night hovers over my path, love,
And down o'er the dark rolling stream,
I haste to the village beyond, love,
Where flickering lights dimly gleam—

When weary I sit at the board, love,
And strive to chat merry and free,
With a weight at my heart to seem gay, love,
You absent, I never can be—

When around the great hearthstone we sit,
love,
Every countenance beaming with joy,
While my heart plays truant with you, love,
Caressing that rosy-lipp'd boy—

When sleepless I turn on my couch, love,
While the hours drag lazily by,
And fancies are crowding my brain, love,
I never can justly tell why—
The light of thine eye, love,
The light of thine eye,
Illumines the mansions within, love,
The light of thine eye.

S. P. B.

DAVID T. STODDARD.

THE MAN AND THE MINISTER.

BY MRS. CAROLINE A. HALBERT.

OPENING Thompson's delightful memorial of his early college friend, Stoddard, we were struck by these remarks of Tholuck :

"Oh, that we were richer, in our German language, in biographical works, which are adapted to illustrate and promote a truly elevated and practical Christianity, by laying open the sanctuary of the inner life! We are able, even in the circle of our own acquaintance, to mention a great number of Christians—and among these, names of the first rank in the religious world—who are indebted essentially to works of biography for the confirmation and stability of their spiritual life."

We can not value too highly the influence of such biographies as a stimulant and moral teacher. Creeds and catechisms are a stone of stumbling to unbelievers, but vital religion, written in the life, is a book which will be read of all men. Even Divinity itself was regarded very much as an abstraction, until it became manifest in the flesh, and *dwelt* among us full of grace and truth. Ever since the Lord of glory bound among the fragrant leaves of the Book of Life so many precious memorials of sainted believers, and especially since the Saviour of the world sat to the rude fishermen of Galilee for his Divine portrait, Christian biography has been one of the most elevated and inspiring of human studies.

Happy the man whose character is worthy to bear the scrutiny of after generations; upon whose features, view them as you will, in front or profile, in action or repose, you can detect no smirk of conceit, no covert malice lurking under a smile, nothing which is not genuine and truthful. Many an arch-demon is conspicuously blazoned in saintly calendars, and Judas will walk arm in arm with John while the world stands; but while

such men as Pascal, Swartz, Oberlin, Martin, and Edwards remain, none but willful skeptics will bewail the the hollowness of religion. To unfold the sacred interior life of such as these, whose thoughts kindle daily into aspiration; who have wrestled down all earthly hopes and idolatries, setting their foot upon them; who have, through grace, quenched even that fierce intellectual thirst which would hinder them in the singleness of their Christian cause; who have made it their great life ambition to tell over and over the simple story of the cross—to enter the sanctuary of such lives, is like opening "vials full of odors," whose rare and costly fragrance will perfume the air for many generations.

Christianity has had no sweeter or more sublime exemplification than among missionaries. From Paul, the apostle, to Xavier, the Catholic; from Xavier to Cary, Judson, Scudder, and Poor, no age, not even the darkest, has been without its select company, who joyfully forsook houses, friends, and fame, that they might preach Christ to the perishing.

Now that the missionary work has become comparatively safe and easy, and a highway has been thrown up into the wilderness, some doubtless have entered it from motives of moral cowardice. Some young men who feared to grapple with life at home, to struggle in its battles, and take their chance with their fellows, have grasped the skirts of this giant power to be borne through life by its resistless will. Such men are a cipher and a dead weight abroad, as they would be at home. But we are of opinion that that mighty missionary organization which has already girded the world with a zone of light, and is fast lighting its beacon fires on every island of the sea, can show such an army of *Great Hearts* toiling among the jungles of India and the snows of Thibet, with the besotted Caffre, and the cannibal Feejee Islander, as history can not parallel. It is good to turn

aside from the dusty highway of life and lift ourselves awhile to the level of these heroic men, to feel in their presence the littleness of those aims and purposes we have pursued, and the pitiful smallness of those trials by which we have been so sorely pressed. Thus we have been refreshed in reading the life before us, and it is with the hope of alluring our readers to its perusal, that we propose to sketch briefly one of the purest ornaments of modern missions.

David Tappan Stoddard was born in Northampton, Mass., Dec. 2, 1818. He was able to trace on his "family tree" an unbroken line of pious ancestors, honorable alike in Church and State. Directly descended from Gov. Winthrop, of Mayflower memory; connected on the father's side with New England's greatest theologian, Jonathan Edwards, and on the mother's, with Benjamin Franklin, there was much in his ancestry to excite an earnest emulation.

The valley which cradled the infancy of Stoddard, is one of the loveliest birth-spots in the world. The village of Northampton, with its cool, quiet streets, its capacious, old-fashioned houses—their fronts shaded by broad-spreading elms—Round Hill in its midst, with its sunny lawns and fragrant shrubberies, and, chiefly, the old grave-yard, planted all over with grave-stones, and the worn foot-path leading always to the hallowed spot where *Brainard* slumbers—the whole picture bathed in the sober light of an autumn day, is still clear on the retina of our memory, as when painted there in our early childhood. The rare scenery which trained the eye and heart of young Stoddard is enthusiastically described by his biographer:

"From almost any elevation in Northampton, the eye takes in on either side the sweep of hills—some wooded, others cultivated to their summit—which bound the horizon twenty miles to the north. Directly to the south, stand the twin mountains, Holyoke and Tom, their roots

interlaced beneath the bed of the river that now divides them, and which seems to have forced its passage through their once united barriers. Extensive meadows, which, like the delta of the Nile, are liable to a yearly deposit of alluvium from the overflow of the river, and the fatness of whose soil is like that of Goshen, stretch southward and eastward almost to the base of the mountains. From time immemorial, these meadows have been bought and sold, and inherited without any division of fence or wall. Thousands of acres thus lie in fields divided only by the meanderings of the river, from whose banks rise meadows, orchards, and arable plots like a succession of terraced gardens, whose perfect culture answers to Emerson's picture of England, as 'finished with a pencil instead of a plow.' At intervals of a few miles, villages are seen reposing upon gentle slopes, in the shade of abundant trees, with an occasional cupola or spire, the symbol in every New England town, of the supremacy of knowledge and religion."

Reared in a refined Christian household, in a community remarkable for intelligence and morality, with Nature drawing him heavenward, day by day, our young friend grew up a cheerful, rollicksome boy, with a face as fair as a girl's, and a nature as gentle. There was little, we imagine, in feature or disposition, to recall the ancestral Edwards, whose high, serene forehead seemed a Mount of Transfiguration in which thought dwelt in company with unutterable realities. We find little in the youth of Stoddard noteworthy here; though, doubtless, many precious recollections of it are cherished in household memories. That great spiritual change which turned the bias of his life, occurred at New Haven during his college course. He had, from childhood, been the subject of many serious impressions, but seems then first to have embraced Christ with full purpose of heart.

Very early in his religious life, Stoddard was impressed with the idea of *peculiar consecration* and *eminent usefulness*. He chose the ministry for his profession, and turned his wishes toward the missionary field. The singleness and fidelity of his heart were soon put to the test. In consequence of his marked taste and talent for scientific pursuits, he was appointed, in his junior year, to an honorable and lucrative post in the Southern Exploring Expedition then about to sail. The romance of the enterprize, with the opportunity of studying those wonderful Southern heavens under skilled observers, was most alluring to the young enthusiast, whose passion was astronomy; moreover, he was but a stripling of nineteen, remarkably tall and slender, and needed some robust employment to give tone and firmness to his muscles. But he had strength to put aside the glittering temptation, and hold steadily on his chosen way, fearing that if he once turned aside to pursuits so congenial, he should never find the moment for return. Years after, when he found his strength so soon wilting under the burning skies of Persia, he may have questioned whether the choice was wisely made, and whether a year or two of sea training would not have added many years to his missionary life; still we must greatly admire the purity and singleness of his heart.

While at Yale, Mr. Stoddard constructed a telescope, of no mean power, with his own hands, which afterward was borne over the Koor-dish mountains, and did him signal service among the Nestorians. He graduated with honor in 1838, and, shortly after, went to Marshall College, Pa., as tutor. Here he was solicited to accept a professorship at Marietta, though he was scarcely twenty years old. In declining the very tempting proposal, he seems to have made up his mind deliberately to be drawn aside from the ministry by no secular consideration. "The

question then came up," he tells us, "will you spend your life in chemical experiments, or in laboring as a minister of the Gospel for the conversion of souls?"

The following year we find him at Andover, earnestly engaged in his theological studies. Writing to his brother, near the close of his course, he says:

"To be a Gospel minister—oh, I feel that it will be a blessed privilege. There is nothing like it in this world. If I know my own heart, I would not exchange the prospect for any earthly good."

Soon after he was licensed to preach, he spent a Sabbath at Middlebury, Vt., and occupied the pulpit. By chance, or rather by Providence, Dr. Perkins, the veteran missionary to Persia, then home on a recruiting visit, was present, and thus describes his first impressions of his future associate:

"After I entered the meeting-house on Sabbath morning, there came in a young man, and ascended the desk, whose appearance was quite youthful, yet very mature, and whose whole air seemed to me more angelic than human. I was no prophet. But hardly could the mind of Samuel of old have been fastened more confidently on David, the son of Jesse, as the future king of Israel, than did my heart fix on David T. Stoddard, from the moment my eye rested on him, as the young man, whom, of all I had ever seen, I could wish to have as our companion in the toils, and trials, and joys of missionary life, and whose prayers and labors here the Lord would delight to honor in the salvation of souls."

As the result of this interview, Mr. Stoddard embarked in the spring of 1843 to join the Mission of the American Board at Oroomiah, Persia. A few weeks previous, he had married Miss Harriet Briggs, a lady of great sweetness, high culture, and earnest piety; seldom is a more congenial marriage consummated on earth.

Of the many farewells spoken, especially to those aged parents in Northampton, of the last look at those venerable elms, the ancestral corner in the old burying-ground, the peaceful Connecticut rolling through fruitful meadows, and the twin mountains—we will not speak; such farewells have been spoken again and again, and will be, until every islet of the sea utters the praise of Jehovah. As these young missionaries stood upon the deck of the *Emma*, and waved a last adieu to weeping friends on shore, as they saw the last headland of their country fade into the horizon, and felt that they were “alone in a wide, wide sea,” they could still say through their tears, “Who would not leave home—ever so dear a home as ours—at the call of his Father in heaven!”

After much tossing by sea and by land, climbing snow-crested mountains, and crossing torrid plains, sleeping beneath Turkish tents, and riding at midnight in the cool moonlight, our missionary friends reached their field of labor in June, 1843.

Oroomiah, the ancient metropolis of the north-western province of Persia, lies at the foot of the Koordish mountains, and contains about twenty-five thousand inhabitants. Near it is a remarkable salt lake, whose sulphurous waters are denser than the Dead Sea; around it, on every side, stretches the plain of Oroomiah, rivaling, in its tropical luxuriance, the rich valley of the Nile. As our missionary band galloped across this glorious valley, then in its greenest verdure, surrounded by welcoming troops of native converts, and led with festive songs into the mud-walled city, they had need of all their sober-mindedness to subdue their fancies to the real color of their future life.

And yet there was enough in their position to rouse the noblest enthusiasm of the Christian heart. They were among a primitive and most interesting people. Shut in on every side by the mountains and the lake,

it seemed as if God had preserved this little inch of earth as an altar whereon the fire of a pure worship might be kept burning through the long night of Mohammedan rule. Neither infidel nor Persian fire-worshiper has been able to proselyte these simple children of Nestorius, and though the Jesuit is ever at their ear, there has always been a remnant among them to protest against the papacy. Dr. Perkins says they may be truly called the *Protestants of Asia*. Docile and eager to know the truth, they require only to be taken by the hand and led back to the true fold. Strip the religion, which they already profess, of its cumbrous ceremonials, and let it be breathed upon by the living Spirit, and what prevents this people from becoming a moral nucleus for Christianizing Asia? Why may not the Light of Life spread thence over Arabia, Turkey, Koordistan, China, and India?

Burning with desire to preach the living Gospel to this people, Mr. Stoddard felt it hard to wait till he had acquired the language; and such was his zeal, that in five months he was able to converse intelligibly in modern Syriac. The male seminary was then given into his charge.

“We all felt,” says Dr. Perkins, “that no living man could be found more competent to assume the very responsible task of rearing a generation of pious Nestorian preachers, whether we regarded the very high order of his own intellect, his finished culture, his moral character, or his holy walk and conversation.”

This seminary, which was his dearest care while he lived, contained about fifty young men, many of them preparing to preach in the three hundred villages which dotted the plain. The Bible, here so ignominiously ignored in our schools, was there made the basis of education, and was seldom laid aside two hours at a time.

How heartily Mr. Stoddard entered into his labors, and how little he was disposed to draw back after having

tested it, we learn from his letters : "Let those stay in America who *must*, but let those who *can*, preach salvation and eternal life in the region and shadow of death;" again, "There has not been a day that I have sighed for my fatherland."

But soon clouds began to lower. From causes, beyond the control of the mission, the Patriarch of the Nestorians assumed a hostile attitude, and, finding they would not concede his unjust demands, dispersed their village schools, sent back a thousand children into a life of ignorance and debasement, excommunicated their helpers, and, for a time, held them in a state of the most painful suspense. The Jesuits also exerted such influences at the Persian court, that they came near being expelled from the country. Mr. Stoddard was severely tried. He could bear separation from friends, and physical hardships with perfect cheerfulness, but to be hindered in his work, to see his dear pupils going back into barbarism, severely tested his faith. He writes: "I think I have suffered more in my feelings, since I came here, than in all my life before;" and yet he adds, "I am teaching ten or a dozen boys in my family with just as much interest as if I were a preacher in Park Street church; and I do not envy the situation of any living man; I am just where God would have me be, and here I mean to stay just so long as he wants me." This is indeed the true missionary zeal which will conquer the world.

After the storm there came a great calm. Those that plagued them, seemed as if smitten by an invisible hand. Confidence was not only restored, but greatly strengthened; the straying sheep returned joyfully to the fold, and the villagers thronged everywhere to hear the tidings of salvation.

Soon there came across the great waters, with the salutation of the missionaries to the churches, a cheering message—a revival among the

Nestorians! It had a marvelous sound, and we were slow to comprehend that the same Gospel which Whitefield and Nettleton preached, which chimed on the Sabbath air of the New World from ten thousand spires, was alike operative in the mud-walled churches, beneath the shadow of Oriental mountains. For twelve years these faithful men had been sowing the seed of truth in an arid soil, and little did they perceive, while the threatening clouds lowered over them, that they were heavy with the nourishing rains for which they had so earnestly prayed. It was indeed a Pentecostal season. The revival, which commenced in the two seminaries, spread from village to village, till the songs of rejoicing converts echoed among the fastnesses of the mountains—the venerable native churches, which for centuries had served only to sepulcher the dry cerements of a dead religion, now resounded with a living Gospel, and a wave of spiritual life and verdure spread over the whole of this desolate region.

No wonder that Mr. Stoddard's spirit kindled as he marked the blessed change, and he seemed, in vision, to see all Asia speedily gathered to Christ. His house became a Bethel. "We emptied one room and one closet after another for prayer, until there were seven or eight places where our pupils could retire. These were occupied from morning to night by those, who, in the bitterness of their souls, were crying out to God. And very often, when the city was all wrapped in slumber, I have heard earnest voices, on this side and on that, of those who were wrestling with the angel of the covenant for a blessing."

Succeeding this harvest of ingathering, there followed two years of unbroken toil. Preaching and teaching, sitting in twilight on some house-top conversing with a quiet group about Christ, superintending the erection of new seminary buildings on a mountain

side near the city, and, above all, watching the spiritual growth of those young men through whom he hoped to live and speak long after he rested in his grave, it is no wonder that his frail body could not keep pace with the ardor of his soul. For many months he was nearly laid aside from labor, and his brethren urgently advised him to try the effect of a voyage to America. But the thought of leaving his place vacant, with no one to enter into his labors, was too painful for him; it was decided that he should take his family and spend some months in traveling leisurely through Turkey, and visiting the mission stations there. Having with great painfulness, on account of his exceeding weakness, reached Trebizond, on the Black Sea, the Lord met him in the way, and gave him a cup to drink whose bitterness none but the exile can know. His beautiful and beloved Harriet, the mother of his babes, and his daily joy in the house of his pilgrimage, was taken, in a moment, from his side. They had, unawares, fallen in the very track of the cholera, then on its tremendous march eastward, and Mrs. Stoddard, full of life and hope, was stricken down. After her peril became manifest, scarcely a half hour was given her for parting and preparation.

"When near her end," said Mr. Stoddard, "I pointed her to Christ, as a precious Saviour, motioning upward with my finger. Her eye followed the motion, and as she lay gazing most earnestly to heaven, her breath gradually became shorter and shorter, and she breathed for the last time. So gently did she pass away, that it was some time before we could say, 'She is gone!' There was not a sigh, nor a struggle, nor a moving feature. All, all was peace."

At dead of night, with no uttered prayer, and no strengthening psalm, one bent and feeble mourner committed to the inhospitable soil of a strange city, all that was most lovely

and cherished in his eyes. When the day dawned, he gathered his two motherless babes in his arms, and fled to the mountains. When the tumult of feeling had somewhat subsided, Mr. Stoddard wrote:

"Oh, it came like a thunderbolt, and I reeled and staggered under the dreadful blow. Had it not been for the remembrance of my little children, and the thought that perhaps God had something more for me to do among the Nestorians, I should have rejoiced to lie down by her side. Do not think this a dreamy sentimentalism. I mean that I should have been glad to lay my bones by that new-made grave, that *with her* I might awake to the joys of heaven." But he adds, "I trust I may say with truth, grace got the mastery of nature, and when the next morning I rode up the mountain to Mr. Power's health retreat, I felt a calm trust in God which bore me above the waves of trouble."

In all this sorrow, he charged not God foolishly, and though he felt all the billows go over him, he could still look up from the depths, and see the stars shining calmly in the sky, and feel a Divine Hand let down to strengthen him.

God was evidently leading him to America. A few weeks later, we find him on board a steamer with his two little daughters, one still a babe, conveying them home to their weeping grandparents; and thus it happened that he, who left Persia for a few months, found his reluctant absence prolonged to three years.

Having lent his little ones in solemn trust to those who would love them well for the mother's sake; having felt the blessed balm of sympathy laid like a healing ointment on his bruised and aching heart; having seen the dim eyes of his parents brighten as they looked again on the Benjamin for whom they had sorely longed, and recruited, in a measure, his broken health, he longed to be "homeward bound." But it was thought best by

the Prudential Committee of the Board that he should tarry still longer and build up his enfeebled constitution, and, as he was able, animate the missionary zeal of the churches at home.

It thus became our privilege to listen to him at one of the great annual festivals of the Board. We shall never forget him. That tall, thin, shadowy form, that almost boyish face irradiated with a heavenly glow, the animation of his voice, as he told us, in glowing words, what God had done for the Nestorians—the form, the face, the unction of his words lie in our memory with all the sweet vividness of a morning landscape in the spring. Never had we felt, as when looking upon that young countenance, whose very lines seemed molded into the expression of radiant happiness, that he who forsakes all for Christ, shall receive a “hundred-fold” in this life.

On the 14th of February, 1851, the eighth anniversary of his union with the sainted Harriet, Mr. Stoddard was married to Miss Sophia Hazen, a beloved and most useful teacher in Mt. Holyoke Seminary. They embarked the following month for Persia, taking with them the oldest daughter.

His welcome to Oroomiah must have been most grateful to his feelings. To Dr. Anderson he writes: “Our progress, across the plain, resembled more a triumphal procession than a caravan of weary travelers. Every successive mile added to our numbers, and our way was almost blocked up by the people who came in throngs to meet us—some on horseback, some on foot,—bishops, priests, deacons, village school-teachers, members of the seminary, with whom I had many times wept, and prayed, and praised—all pressing forward in eager haste to press our hands and swell the notes of welcome. Three years ago, these same persons followed us out of the city, holding the horses by the bridles, and begging

us not to leave them, while the tears chased one another down their cheeks, and their mournful looks bespoke the sorrow of their hearts.” And as he entered his old home, a thousand remembrances animated him. “On this stairway how often have I stumbled over the pupils, when, unable to find a closet, they had kneeled down here, under cover of night, to pour out their souls to God. In this wood-house, our pupils, straitened for places of retirement, divided the room by piles of wood into compartments, that each might find a little Bethel where he could meet his Saviour. Under these trees they used to sit, at early dawn, bending over the pages of the Book of Life. After three years’ absence, all these scenes came fresh to my remembrance, and produced mingled emotions of joy, gratitude, and praise.”

We should like to follow this good man, step by step, through the six years of his remaining pilgrimage—to accompany him on those preaching tours among the villages, when he made the air jubilant with songs and hymns which he had learned at his mother’s knee, and to get into sympathy with that pure and lark-like spirit which was always singing anthems of praise, because always in harmony with God and his works. We should like to sit in his school-room, and see him opening to his pupils the manifold treasures of his elegant culture, with as much enthusiasm as if he were a Professor in the University at Berlin,—gathering up, by methodical calculation, all the fragments of time, that he might make scientific observations, or construct microscopes and magic lanterns for his pupils, pressing his great mechanical skill, with *all* his faculties, into the service of Christ, and maintaining in the midst of an ungodly people such near and unbroken communion with God, as anchorets have wrestled for in the deserts and rocky solitudes. If there is any weapon which can cleave asunder the compacted mail

of infidelity, it is the life of such a man as Stoddard. When a young man of marked strength and promise, of choice and varied scholarship, an enthusiast in the most absorbing of scientific pursuits, of warm, social, and domestic attachments, not only consents to leave all his earthly aspirations behind him, but counts it *joy* to live in life-long association with a rude and degraded people, contracting himself to their small capacities that he may lift them to his hopes, how, we ask, does the infidel account for the phenomenon?

One more scene in the life of Stoddard, and we leave him. On Christmas-day, 1856, he laid down to die. Typhus fever had taken fatal hold on his enfeebled system, and medical skill was vain. During a whole month in which his soul was taking leave of its attenuated frame, perfect peace possessed him, and sat radiant on every feature. "All about me," he would say, "is so peaceful, the bed is so peaceful, the room is so peaceful, and every thing is done for me so 'quietly';" and again, "I lie here and think of the good, both among the living and the dead, particularly of my dear mother,—she seems very near to me."

When he awoke from sleep, the first whisper of his feeble lips was often some text or verse full of praise; and even in his delirium, his heart, like a pure fountain, sent forth only pure and sweet waters. His sick chamber was a Beulah, and through its windows he seemed to look out into living pastures, and to see one like the Son of God walking in the midst of the garden. There were no stormy winds to trouble the waters when he went down into Jordan. His last words, whispered faintly in the ear of his wife, were, "All well—do you understand—all right." And so, leaning on the arm of his Beloved, he vanished out of our sight.

Devout men carried this holy man to his burial, and laid him down to sleep, till the morning of the resurrec-

tion, among the people he had loved so well; and often in the twilight, while the shadows are falling around, his loving disciples gather about his grave, and chant there, in their own Syriac, the sweet and melodious strains they had caught from his lips.

BROTHER BEN'S WIFE.

FROM THE NOTE-BOOK OF AN OLD BACHELOR.

BY HELEN L. BOSTWICK.

"BROTHER BEN, what is the matter with your wife?"

I put this question with much real, and little apparent interest, for the overshadowed prospects of my brother's once happy home had of late filled me with the deepest anxiety; yet, while determined, if it were possible, to ascertain the cause—the first secret Ben had ever kept from me, his twin brother—I did not wish needlessly to alarm him.

Ben threw away the cigar he had just lighted, and looked me steadily and gloomily in the face. "True enough," he said, "what is the matter?"

"It is a mystery that I would like to have explained, brother Ben; tending, as you are aware I am, toward matrimony, such fluctuations of the domestic barometer interest me. Fancy Jenny P. . . ., transplanted to my home, growing thin, and white, and silent—"

"Charley, stop, for Heaven's sake! I am just about distracted. Feel my hand, Charley."

I did so, and found it dry and parched with fever, while his pulse beat full and hard, and too rapidly for me to count.

"Charley," he commenced again, "for three months I have been the most wretched being in existence. Anna is in a decline—I feel sure of it. She is dying; but her disease is mental, and I am the cause! You look doubtful, but it is the solemn truth, I do assure you!"

Thoroughly alarmed at the increasing seriousness of the matter, I wished first to pacify, that I might the better

question him; so I answered, quietly, "You are excited, Ben, and alarmed about your wife, more than is at all necessary, I dare say. That she is suffering from debility and nervous prostration is evident, but there are remedies for such ailments. Apply to Dr. R. . . . at once."

"I consulted him, weeks ago. He can not help her, for, as I told you, her malady is of the mind, and medicine but increases it. I shall lose her, Charley, and all through my own rashness and folly."

"Pshaw, Ben! you talk like a mad tragedy actor. What have you done? Given her a few harsh words, I suppose, when you were perplexed about business, and the remembrance of it goads your tender conscience, and is worrying you to death."

"Not *me*, Charley! Good God, if it were only me, I could bear it!"

"Why have you never told me of this before, Ben?"

"Because I was a coward. I waited for you to ask me; and yet I hoped and flattered myself that my fears had in some degree deceived me, that others did not perceive the change that appalls me so much. You were at my house last night, Anna tells me; I came here now to see if you would speak. Tell me what in her conduct and looks struck you most forcibly."

Now it would never do to tell brother Ben that the marked change in the whole appearance of his wife had so utterly startled and shocked me, that it was impossible to designate one thing as more noticeable than the rest; that her hand was cold and clammy, and her smile only half natural as she rose from her listless attitude to greet me; that she conversed with an effort so apparent as to be absolutely painful; that no persuasion could induce her to sing or play for me; and that I utterly failed to interest her in a game of chess, formerly her favorite recreation, and one that called out alike the glee of her sunny temper, and the sparkle of

her brilliant intellect. I could not tell him that her languid eye and dejected manner had haunted my dreams, and distracted my thoughts from the day's labor. I answered simply:

"You know, Ben, that for several weeks past, owing to a pressure of office business, I have been but an unfrequent caller at your house, and, therefore, it is probable that the change struck me more unfavorably than it would otherwise have done. Her listless appearance, and want of interest in any subject I could name, surprised and troubled me, but they are, doubtless, the effect of physical debility, and will yield to proper treatment."

"That is the way she is, Charley. Absent and spiritless, rousing herself, by an effort, when she sees that her manner is the subject of conversation, but relapsing into indifference the moment the restraint is removed. I have no hope of ever seeing her restored to the gay demonstrative creature she was six months ago. Not the least hope in the world, Charley."

I well remembered how beautiful and joyous she had been on her wedding-day; and how, for two bright years, she had made his home an earthly Paradise. From whence had this dark cloud arisen? What spirit of evil brooded over my brother's hearth? I must fathom the mystery to the bottom.

"Courage, Ben," I said, affecting a cheerfulness far from genuine; "I will undertake the case, and feel confident that it is curable. First tell me all you can respecting the causes of this strange state of things."

Ben looked moodily out of the window, and remained silent.

"Did you quarrel?"

"Yes!"

"Then you deserve to suffer!" was the thought that sprang to my lips, but I checked its unwise expression. That Anna was sometimes exacting and a little willful, I well knew. It was the fault of her early training, which, upon the death of her

parents in childhood, had not been given into the most judicious hands. But then she was so true-hearted, so generous, so quick upon reflection to see and acknowledge where the right lay, that the idea of her being seriously blamable in any difference with her husband, was too strange to be readily admitted.

"Never mind, Ben, married couples have always quarreled, and with one exception, I suppose, always will. Make haste, and relieve your burdened spirit by a full confession."

My poor brother! I had never thought his cheery face could wear such a settled gloom. He drew back his chair, that the light might not reveal the workings of his features, and began:

"Charley, do you remember the night of Mrs. Light's grand party?"

"Perfectly well; and that Anna, from being the life of the company, ran away at a ridiculously early hour, because you were ill—or she feared so."

"Well, from that night I date her decline and my misery."

"Go on."

"That night I returned from my business, fretted and anxious about some money matters, and found Anna awaiting me with considerable impatience."

"You will be late at Mrs. Light's!" was her first exclamation.

"I had forgotten the party, although she had showed me the cards two days before, and spoken of it, as something expected to be very delightful. I felt every way disinclined to go, and answered hastily:

"It seems to me the party season will never end. I am tired of them, and, moreover, I am not well to-night. Don't you think we had better stay at home?"

"I was not surprised to see her countenance fall, for she was fond of amusements, though always willing to give them up for a quiet evening at home, when I could spend it with her, which was but seldom of late."

"If it were an ordinary affair, I would not mind, but I shall be sorry to miss this one," she answered, discontentedly.

"What! if I remain home with you?"

"Oh, no!" And her countenance brightened at once. "If you will only be sick, and sit by the fire, and let me bathe your head, and make you herb tea, I shall be delighted."

"But upon second thoughts," I answered, "I must return to the store for a little business matter, and it is scarcely possible that I can be with you."

"Then, if you do not object, I will go with Mrs. H. . . ."

"I did not object, but was far from being pleased. I think if my feelings were analyzed, I wished her to remain at home, upon the mere possibility of my returning to pass the evening with her. As I left the room, she followed me with an undecided air."

"Which will you do?" she said smilingly.

"I can not tell," was my reply, "I may return, or I may not."

"Then if Mrs. H. . . . calls, shall I go?"

"Just as you please," I answered, shutting the door behind me. I thought she would have remained, and when at my return I found her gone, bitter and unkind thoughts took possession of my mind. Disappointed at the loss of the quiet, cozy evening I had anticipated, I was ready to accuse her of preferring the society of her gay associates to mine, forgetting that she had really no reason to suppose I intended to return. I did not design to upbraid her with this, but determined in some manner to manifest my displeasure. In a very little time her light step was in the hall, and her hand upon the door."

"Oh, Ben! Did you really come? How I wish I had staid at home. If you could only have told me—"

"I thought, Anna," said I, gravely, "that I sufficiently indicated my design of returning."

"She drew back, and looked confusedly in my face, as if trying to recall the words I had used. I saw that she was wounded, but she did not come to me and seek a reconciliation as I wished, in my selfishness, that she should do. She only sat down, looked pensively in the grate, sighed a little, and began taking off her embroidered sleeves and jewelry. She unhooked a bracelet from her arm that I had never seen before, and my curiosity was immediately excited regarding it.

"Let me see that," I said, abruptly, and reaching toward the bracelet. She noticed the request only with a little coquettish shake of the head, and kept on toying with the ornament. "Where did you get it, Anna?" I inquired.

"It came from a friend," was her quiet, and, as I thought, evasive answer.

"My anger was roused by it, and though I had not the smallest suspicion that she had become possessed of the bracelet in any questionable manner, I thought that by allowing her to suppose this, I would draw the truth from her.

"And from whom," I asked, "have you been fortunate enough to receive so expensive a present?"

"She smiled saucily, without looking up, and drawing the glittering links backward and forward over her wrist, remained silent. It was my first unpleasant experience of those qualities I had so much admired in Anna before her marriage, and which had enabled her unfriended girlhood to overcome obstacles that would have crushed one less determined. The proud spirit and strong will had never before come in contact with my own without an immediate and graceful yielding upon her part, and playful as her opposition to my wishes had been thus far, it annoyed me, and I wished it at an end.

"For the purpose of ending it, I rose to take the jewel from her careless hold; but, rising quickly, she

glided to the mantel, laid the bracelet upon it, and stood by, keeping guard over it with one beautiful bared arm. Ah, me! how round and fair it was then, how wasted now!"

"Well, go on."

"I think she expected that I would follow, and attempt to take it from her, as I had often done before, after a playful scuffle. But play was no part of my intention now, especially as I perceived that a costly ring which I had given her a year previous, and which she constantly wore, was missing from her finger. I reseated myself, and asked coldly:

"Where is the ring I saw on your finger this morning?"

"A friend has it," she returned, with equal coolness.

"The same who gave you the bracelet?"

"The same."

"Will you tell me who it is?"

"I do not choose to."

"But will you tell me?"

"No, sir!"

"Do you know the consequences of such concealments, Anna, even in trifles? Do you know that they destroy all confidence in married life, and make of it a miserable and irksome bondage?" No answer, but I thought a tear dimmed her eye. If I had *then* spoken kindly! But I went on, "You can take what course you choose, Anna, but recollect this thing, that if you persist in refusing the satisfaction I ask, you do it at what most wives would consider a very great risk."

"This time the smile was full of scorn and defiance. She gathered up the ornaments without a word, and the moment I finished speaking, bade me a polite good-night, and went to her own room.

"Of course, as my temper cooled, I grew very much ashamed of my unwise harshness. To suppose that a wife like my Anna would brook to be suspected and questioned like a married coquette or an easy-laced 'woman of society!' What expedient I

might have decided upon to bring about a reconciliation, I can not guess, for a glance at the mirror changed the whole current of my thoughts.

"My wife had left the door of our room slightly ajar, though from my position, I could see nothing within. But accidentally directing my eyes to a mirror opposite, I could see her depositing the bracelet in a private drawer of her bureau and, after locking it, place the key among the folds of the bed-curtains; the last place probably which would occur to any one inclined to search for it.

"My plan of action was fixed at once. I waited until her breathing assured me of her sound sleeping, and then stepping noiselessly across the room, secured the key, and unlocked the drawer. Don't look shocked, Charley—no man ever gets so nearly jealous as I was without doing some very mean things. I examined the bracelet closely; it had the initials A. M. upon the inside. Touching a well-concealed spring, a miniature sprang from the cameo clasp; a very familiar face—no other than that of my friend and business partner, Abel Mansfield—and around the rim were these words: '*Adieu to one beloved.*'

"Abel Mansfield had sailed a few days before in the California steamer; his wife, a lovely and delicate woman, and an intimate friend of Anna's, was a frequent visitor at our house. I will not pain you, Charley, by a detail of the feelings that bewildered and oppressed me. I did not believe that Anna intended to conceal the gift from me; I believe that had I approached the subject with less irritation of manner, she would have acquainted me with all the circumstances. But I was vexed and distressed that she had received it at all; mentally accusing her of that kind of 'married trifling,' which, common as it may be in our *best society*, I had rejoiced in believing my wife an utter stranger to. Little sleep visited my pillow that night, and breakfast was

a comfortless meal. Anna at first seemed disposed to cheerfulness, but I would not be coaxed out of my torment. In the evening I again referred to the bracelet and ring, avoiding, however, any intimation that I had seen it without her knowledge. My manner was harsh, and she gave me only sullen replies.

"Weeks passed away—miserable weeks, marked only by increased coldness and wretchedness on both sides. Her continued silence on the unhappy cause disturbed and disappointed me. I began, with a horror that chills my blood to remember, to entertain fears that she had more cause for concealment than I had supposed; that her intimacy with my absent partner had been of a less harmless character than first appeared. Yes, Charley—open your eyes in astonishment—I was partially demented. Day and night I brooded over the blasting of my domestic peace, yet I must have dissembled well, since even your watchful eyes failed to detect any traces of the heart's disquiet. Finally, after a month had passed in this way, I came to the determination to bring matters to a crisis. I would bear the torment of suspense no longer.

"One day after dinner, for the first time since our quarrel, I seated myself on the sofa by Anna's side. She had her sewing in her hand, and, as I approached, bent lower over her work.

"'Anna,' I said calmly, and without removing my eyes from her face, 'I have this morning taken a resolution from which nothing can tempt me to swerve. This wretched manner of living must come to an end. That you are no longer happy with me is increasingly evident, and my own state of feeling for the last few weeks is too harrowing for me to analyze. You know the origin of this miserable change, and that the remedy rests solely with yourself. Give me your entire confidence, or we must henceforth walk separate paths, and

dwell in separate homes. Will you take one day for consideration, or will you decide at once?"

"At the commencement of my speech, her face had expressed only blank astonishment; as I proceeded, her breath came hurriedly, a spasmodic clenching of her fingers about the little ivory basket in her lap, assured me that she had not listened unmoved. But her countenance and tongue she had under the most perfect control; not a muscle changed, not a sound escaped her lips. In one moment more I had left the room and the house, but looking back, as I closed the door, I saw that her face had assumed an ashy paleness. I saw this, but I did not hear her fall; Charley, I swear it! Had I even imagined the fearful excitement under which she was laboring, I would never have left her thus—*never*, so may Heaven judge me!"

Brother Ben stopped, looked in my eyes despairingly, while I poured out a glass of water, and went on in a broken voice:

"After leaving the house, I walked about rapidly—up one street and down another—uncaring, and almost unconscious whither my feet turned. An hour had passed when I entered my counting-room. There I was met by a hurried message summoning me home. I found Anna lying cold and unconscious upon the bed, to which she had been carried by the servant-girl, who found her lying in a fit upon the parlor floor. She must have fallen there almost immediately upon my departure. Half distracted, I dispatched a second messenger for our family physician, but he was absent from home. A noted practitioner from another state, however, was on a visit at his house, and returned with the messenger. He pronounced it a case of sudden congestion of the brain, and prescribed for her, asking no questions. Charley, conceive, if you can, of the agony of the hour that followed. On the table by the bedside lay the identical

ring I had given her, fastened to a small black cord, which I remembered seeing about her neck.

"Where were these found?" I asked of the girl who attended upon her mistress.

"They fell from the bosom of the dress, sir, when we unloosed her clothes," was the reply. This was comfort, yet it went to my heart with a sharp, sharp pang. My poor, proud, suffering Anna! Through all our long and cruel estrangement, she had worn my little gift next her heart.

"Well, Charley, the moment that consciousness returned, and she became aware who was bending over her, she drew my ear to her lips, and began the confession that a few hours ago I had so imperiously demanded. As earnestly now I begged her to be quiet—to rest. In vain I hushed her lips with kisses, and taking the ring from its cord, slipped it upon her finger, bidding her be silent. She would not, but insisted with a sweet but very melancholy smile, on telling her story, as there was so little to tell.

"Charley, the bracelet was never given her at all: and she was not even aware that it contained a miniature. She exchanged ornaments with Mrs. Mansfield for that one evening at Mrs. Light's, with the intention of meeting in the shawl-room after the party for a re-exchange. But Anna, being in haste to return to me, did not wait for her friend, but wore the bracelet home. Early next morning she returned it to its owner, and received her ring again; but stung by my unkindness, she would not put it upon her finger, but wore it always around her neck. The dropping of the key among the curtain-folds was an unconscious act, for she was bewildered and greatly agitated by what had passed.

"Our acknowledgments were full and mutual,—for Anna would not allow me to bear what she termed her portion of blame—and our reconciliation complete, though, as I perceived, on her part very sad.

And this is the strangest part of the story ; she has never recovered either her health or spirits. A subdued reserve in her manner, a quiet languor in her attitude, that increased instead of wearing away, soon became so decided as to alarm me. I feared that the severe ordeal through which she had passed, had abated her affection for me, but this she solemnly denies, and I believe her. I can not mistake the brightened expression and quickened pulse with which she greets my coming, nor the anxious attempts to seem interested in my plans for her pleasure and comfort. Neither does she believe *me* changed. She can not; for never, even in the sweet uncertainty of courtship, did I strive so earnestly to win her smiles, as since that cruel misunderstanding. Nothing interests her. Even the little household cares in which she found so much delight, are now a burden. Her step is slow, her eye heavy, and a decided, though apathetic melancholy pervades every thing she does or says. The fact is, Charley, my injustice and severity crushed her fine high spirit:—I only pray they may not have broken her heart,—and though she cherishes no ill-feeling, and even insists that she was chiefly in fault, the shock has been too great for her gentle nature ; the iron has entered her soul, and no care, no affection can heal the wound. Now, Charley, advise me if you can, but do not flatter me with empty encouragement."

"Pardon me, Ben, I see no particular opening for flattery of any kind. But what reason does Anna herself give for this strange alteration?"

"None at all, except an unaccountable lassitude and depression, utterly foreign to her nature."

"Have you tried the effect of genial company and amusements?"

"Both ; and the effect was bad. She shrinks within herself, and enjoys nothing ; besides being tormented with the knowledge that curious eyes are upon her. Nothing pleases her so much as to be *let alone*."

"But you must not let her alone ; you should take her upon a journey."

"I have repeatedly urged it, but her repugnance to traveling is so great, that in her present condition I can not think it would prove beneficial."

"There must be some method taken to arouse her from the stupor that is creeping over her ; this paralysis of heart, and nerve, and brain. For it is simply that, though the physicians would name it by long Latin names, and make a scientific mystery of what is to me as clear as that glass of water. Anna's mental constitution is peculiar. She was stunned—overwhelmed by your distrust of her and your suggestion of a separation. The reaction following was too great for her strength, and her health failing, a despondency which she can not account for, nor reason away, and yet has no power to resist, winds its toils about her. You must break up all this. Devise something that shall start a fresh train of thought and feeling, and turn her life-current into new channels."

"Very well, Charley ; only tell me how. I would gladly give every dollar I am worth to-night, to hear her carol one strain, or laugh one of her old trilling laughs, or even have a hearty cry. Any thing but this frigid apathy that is sapping the springs of her very life."

An hour longer we sat together, Brother Ben and I, and when at length he arose and buttoned his coat for a walk home, his animated countenance contrasted very satisfactorily with his first appearance in my office that evening.

* * * * *

It was the third morning after the above interview, that, as I sat at my round table arranging some briefs for the approaching term of court, I was startled by a tremendous peal of the knocker, and the almost immediate apparition of a lady in my ante-room. I say startled, for I had not expected brother Ben's wife to make her

entrance quite so early or so noisily. She was there, however, and evidently for a purpose, for as I rose to meet her, she raised her vail and confronted me with a changing cheek and an eager gaze of excitement and alarm. Declining the chair I offered her, and then next moment sinking helplessly into it, she placed an open letter in my hand.

"Brother Charles," she began, with a tremor in her voice delicious to hear, for it spoke of fountains of feeling unlocked and irrepressible; "Brother Charles, I am in great trouble, and have come to you for assistance."

I bowed, and she pointed to the letter, which I read immediately, I can not say attentively; considering that it was the same letter which I had, with such an infinity of trouble, persuaded Brother Ben to write only the evening before. It ran thus:

"MY BELOVED WIFE:—When this meets your eye, I shall be in New York, en route for California. Do not blame me that I could not bid you farewell; I deemed it best that both should be spared that anguish. Perhaps I have erred in keeping you in ignorance of my business embarrassments, and my late most disastrous failure—disastrous, because I am indebted to many who can ill afford to lose. I go to retrieve my losses and theirs. You will still occupy the house, and my brother will see that you want for nothing. Go to him freely in any trouble. I beseech you, care for your health, and do not grieve for me. We may yet be happy. Forgive me, dear Anna, all the unhappiness I have caused you, and remember me only as the truest and most devoted of husbands."

My heart smote me as I threw the letter upon the table, and met the agonized gaze that was lifted to mine. I tried to recollect some of the common-place consolations that I had prepared for the trial, but she stopped me.

"You see, Charles, something must be *done*, and quickly. He must have confided all to you. Do you know the amount of his indebtedness?"

"Not over fifteen thousand," I answered, with the utmost veracity.

She looked infinitely relieved, and grasped my hands in both of hers.

"Oh, if he had only told me!—only told me! But I have been so—so self-absorbed of late, so blinded, that he could not expect sympathy from me. Strange—strange I did not guess what so preyed on his spirits, and robbed his nights of sleep. I deserve it all, but he must not go, Charley,—he *must not go*. He must be recalled."

"Well, Anna, any thing you have to propose."

"Why, what *can* I propose, except to discharge the debts myself, as a wife should. Is not mine his? You know what I have in the bank; take it; and the rents of the houses on High Street are mostly unpaid. Take them, or, if necessary, sell the houses. Take all—is it not his?"

"But your own support, Anna?"

"My support! What do I need? Can't I live in a cottage with him? In a garret—anywhere; and wear calico, and help him to commence anew?"

"Well, Anna, if you really mean this, I will do my best to intercept him, though there is reason to fear that he may sail before a letter can reach him."

She paced the room in uncontrollable excitement. What would not Ben have given to see her now!

"We can telegraph," she said, nervously tapping the table, as if in imitation of the wires. "He can not much more than have reached New York. Send dispatches to the hotels, and the shipping agents. Some of them must reach him. At all events, we can try."

I promised all she wished, procured a carriage, bade her take a composing draught and lie down the moment she reached home, and promised to be with her in an hour. Then, as long as she could see me from the carriage windows, I walked very fast toward the telegraph office; afterward, I returned very leisurely to my briefs.

When I went to Brother Ben's house an hour after, I met once more

the Anna of old days. Anxious she still was, but spirited, earnest, full of hopeful plans for the future, impatient to show to her husband that she was not the frigid, insensible block she had appeared.

In due time that gentleman arrived, and received from his restored wife smiles, tears, kisses, and a legal surrender of all the property she had inherited from her parents, and which she had hitherto retained in her own name. I confess that I had fears of another "reaction," but there was no danger. The delicate balance of her mind was restored, and it never again wavered.

Years of sweet content and happiness have passed since then, and Brother Ben has long since returned her "loan" with interest. How much of the little conspiracy detailed above, he may have disclosed to her, I can not guess, but I do not think she knows to this day that at the very moment she was pacing my office, distractedly wringing her hands, and imploring me to save her from prospective California widowhood, Brother Ben was sitting in a private parlor of a little hotel in the suburbs of the city, vainly endeavoring to do justice to an excellent mutton-chop and dish of coffee, while waiting with restless impatience for the message that was to confirm his newly-raised hopes, or dash them forever.

THE PRISONER'S GUEST.

BY MISS MARY J. CROSMAN.

"A little child shall lead them."—ISAIAH.

"CAN you tell me where's the State's Prison?" asked a tired, trembling voice.

The company of urchins playing on the outskirts of Auburn paused, and the largest of the group said, "You see whar that old engine's a puffin', don't you? wal, it's right acrost the road—you'll see the great, high walls in a minute, and the men walkin' on 'em with their guns."

"Better walk straight, or they'll pint at you," was the volunteered advice of a second, known as "Wormy Wel."

The motherless-looking group went on teasing a poor three-footed mastiff, and the little heated traveler, drawing up his form erect as possible, hurried along.

He stood by the gate. "Will you please to let me come in, sir?—my father's here."

The gate-keeper looked up from his toil, lifted his hat deliberately, wiped the moisture from his face, and pocketing his red handkerchief, advanced slowly, turned the key, and admitted the boy.

He passed up the stone steps into the hall, and sat down; presently the chaplain entered. "I want to see my father," were the words that met his look of inquiry.

"How long has he been here, my little fellow?"

"This is the second year," and the child's lip quivered. The questioner hesitated. "They said he stole some horses—so he was brought here; but mother don't think he did;" and perfect faith seemed written on every feature, and spoken by every expression of his countenance.

"What was your father's name?" and the chaplain took the small hand on the settee-arm in his own.

"Charles Winfield."

"What kind of a looking man is, or was he?"

"He was tall, and real good-looking; had black hair and eyes, and white, clean teeth, and nice whiskers; he used to buy me primers, and let me drive, and a great many things."

"What shall I call your name?"

"My name is Charles, too, but everybody calls me Charley."

"And you are lonesome without your father?" Charley essayed to speak, but something in his throat hindered. "You shall see him in about an hour," said Mr. Mann.

The chaplain sat for awhile in deep thought. He knew Charles Winfield

—he had known him years before. Their acquaintance commenced in youth, at a well-filled seminary, where for several months they occupied the same room. Winfield was a gay, impulsive youth, but good-hearted, intelligent, and handsome. Evil associates and a small fortune had been his ruin. The school year closed, and the two parted, cherishing high hopes of success and happiness. Ten years passed, and they met for the first time as convict and chaplain!

That morning, Mr. Mann had visited Winfield in his cell, for he was just recovering from an attempt to end his life. In the afternoon he was thought able to work, so the chaplain sought the carpet-factory, the department in which Winfield labored. He advanced to the keeper's stand. "How does Winfield appear?" he asked.

"Wall," said the personage addressed, after relieving his mouth of its encumbrance, "he wants a pretty straight hand, but there's more man than animal about him, and the man's the part to touch; some of 'em 'll bend like a young hickory, but it ain't these proud, high-headed ones, mind you," and with thumbs in his button-holes, and a countenance that indicated every thing but good management, he modestly hinted at the success and originality of his tactics. However, a convict near by, overhearing his comparison, gave him a frigid, furtive glance, which seemed to say, "You'll see who'll bend, perhaps." "'Cording to your talk, parson, the devil's got both hands on Winfield, and he don't mean to let go," continued the keeper, giving himself and the subject a different position.

"I shall trust a good deal to your management," was Mr. Mann's appreciative reply; "it's about time to close, isn't it?" said he, turning to leave.

"Just about," said the colloquist, pressing the spring of his hunter.

The signal for closing sounded.

The prisoners defiled in at the lower stone door. Winfield hesitated a moment, as he reached out for his ration of mush and molasses; he had eaten nothing since the day before, but hunger was only a drop in his cup of misery.

They started out for his cell—Mr. Mann, Charley, and his attendant.

That day, in blindness and bitterness, the prisoner had cursed his God; that day his spirit had chafed and fretted like a fearful demon; that night the tempter's power was shaken, and like the carol of a bird after the storm-clouds break, there floated to his ear the notes of a childish hymn,

"There is a happy land,
Far, far away."

With a groan, a smothered "Oh, dear!" he pressed his temples wildly, muttering, "the last line's true enough;" yet Abaddon trembled. He paid no heed to the knock at his door; the slide was moved.

"Mr. Winfield, don't you want to see us? there's a little fellow has a claim on you, out here."

"A claim to make you more miserable," rumbled a voice in his heart.

They turned the key, and the iron door swung heavily in; pale and haggard sat the prisoner on his cot, with his ration before him, untasted. He started nervously—"Charley!" said he, with thrilling emphasis.

"Father! father! is it you?"

The chaplain and his attendant drew back. The passionate hold of the parent relaxed; words of affection were spoken; and Charley's dark, hopeful eyes lit up with joy—he forgot the cell, the striped apparel, all, save the presence of his father.

Finally, the husband found voice to say, "How is your mother? does she ever say any thing about me?" he whispered, straining the child to his bosom.

"She cries every day," replied Charley, with a manner that enforced the words he spake; "and she prays every night for you, and we all do,

though little Fanny can't pray much—all she can say is, 'God, pleas to let my papa come home!'" and, for the moment, Charley seemed rather to plume himself on superior attainments.

There was a pause.

"Who did you come out with?" asked the father.

"Not any one. Uncle James came after mother this morning to go to stay there till to-morrow night, and I was to go to grandpa's; but they didn't expect me, and I thought it wouldn't be wrong to come out here—I wanted to see you so bad, father," and the child laid his head back on the parental shoulder, and stroked the thin cheeks with a love that sin had not diminished. "You have to wear these clothes Sundays, pa?" queried Charley, rather abstractedly, for his thoughts wandered toward the snug little wardrobe of his own. "Mother has made me a nice coat out of your green one, and trimmed it with buttons and braid. You'll leave these clothes here, won't you, father? for I never want any made out of them," said Charley, with a half shudder, as he remembered certain habits of home economy. "Fanny," he continued, "has got a new red dress and cape just alike, and a little, white plush bonnet she wears to church, and she will carry ma's hymn-book, and hold it open when they sing. How long before you can come home, father?" asked Charley, rather timidly.

"Home!"—the word had a strange and thrilling vibration—its memories were like apples of gold! its pictures were vivified before him. He saw the faithful, patient wife tenderly pleading for his return, or devising ingenious plans to break the snares that had bound him. Though her love and labor had failed, they were not lost, as the fruit yet to be gathered should testify.

Winfield wiped away the tears, and endeavored to throw off the sorrow that pressed him so heavily.

"Where will you sleep to-night, my son?" asked he, the parent triumphing over the prisoner.

Mr. Mann heard the question, and pushing back the door, said, "I will furnish him with a bed, and perhaps we had better retire now—he must be hungry, I think."

"I don't know but I ought to go back to-night. Uncle James said there would be a bright moon."

"How far?" asked the chaplain.

"It's fifteen miles, but I'm not afraid."

Mr. Mann stated that he was to take an early ride on the boy's route the next morning.

The father and child parted!

A heavy pressure of guilt rested upon Winfield's conscience for succeeding days; still the living voice of dulcimer sweetness sounded, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." The winning tones of his child floated at every nightfall to his ear—they lingered by him till morning, and the din of the machinery could not drown them through the laborious day.

Ere the prison-time closed, Charles Winfield was another man; under the highest, a little child had led him into the up-tending path. That path the united family now walk together.

EDUCATION does not commence with the alphabet. It begins with a mother's look; with a father's nod of approbation, or a sign of reproof; with a sister's gentle pressure of the hand, or a brother's noble act of forbearance; with handfuls of flowers in green and daisied meadows; with birds' nests admired, but not touched; with creeping ants and almost imperceptible emmets; with pleasant walks in shady lanes; and with thoughts directed, in sweet and kindly tones and words, to nature, to beauty, to acts of benevolence, to deeds of virtue, and to the center of all good—to God himself.

THE CRIPPLE.

BY PHILO EARLE HARDY.

To childhood all the years
 By summers bright are told,
 How 'mid the curling hair
 Is laid the sunshine's gold;
 But on this tender head,
 If thus we count the years,
 Winters had come alone,
 Laden with pain and tears.

The face was pale and wan,
 With large, sad eyes of brown,
 Into whose wistful depths
 All pitying, one look'd down;
 Upon the brow so white
 Deep lines of pain were drawn,
 And from the sad, thin lips
 The careless smiles were gone.

How dark and damp the hair
 Lay on his temples blue;
 And oh, the childish hands
 Look'd sad and pallid too.
 The tiny, helpless feet
 No bounding tread had known,
 His trembling, boyish life
 A weariness had grown.

No nodding clover heads
 Beneath his step were crush'd;
 No springing from the bank
 Where dancing brooklets gush'd;
 No climbing where the sun
 First tinges all the trees;
 No dashing through the woods
 Where sobs the chilly breeze.

No dancing gay and free
 Out in the sunshine warm;
 No breasting wild, fierce winds,
 Or meeting winter's storm.
 Grown old and worn, when scarce
 His boy-life has begun,
 Groping in shadowy gloom,
 While others meet the sun.

God keep the waters sweet
 Down in his stricken soul,
 Or o'er it blighting waves
 In bitterness will roll.
 Not always will it last,
 All feet at last grow still—
 His life may grow all bright
 Beyond death's waves so chill.

HOME AMUSEMENTS.

THEIR simplicity and cheapness do not measure the amount of happiness they confer. In cities there are many temptations to spend the long winter evenings away from home, and, at the same time, to spend money and health with reckless extravagance. But, the majority of our

readers could not, if they would, go out five or six nights of the week to the concert, lecture, ball-room, theater, or opera. Their places are beside the glowing hearthstones of the country, where, although peace and plenty abound, there may be danger of dullness and ennui, leading to ill-temper, or carping, or, what is just as bad, indifference, monotony, and dissatisfaction. Cultivate home amusements. Every thing which brings cheerfulness, gayety, and delight to the home circle, should be courted. It is not only the hearts of the children which are made merry, but the rosy-cheeked daughters, tall enough to expect occasional visits from their sweethearts, and the brown-faced youths, who might otherwise be idling about the village shops, who grow smiling and content where the influences of home are cordial and mirthful, while the hearts of the "old folks" grow young to witness the innocent hilarity which prevails.

Mothers, if you wish your sons to be steeled against the temptations which beset them in their out-door life—sisters, if you love the company, converse, and affectionate regards of your brothers—make home a place of pleasant associations and harmless amusement, and you will bind them as with a golden chain.

READING.—Keep your view of men and things extensive, and, depend upon it, that a mixed knowledge is not a superficial one. As far as it goes, the views that it gives are true; but he who reads deeply in one class of writers only, gets views which are almost sure to be perverted, and which are not only narrow, but false. Adjust your proposed amount of reading to your time and inclination—this is perfectly free to every man; but whether that amount be large or small, let it be varied in its kind, and widely varied. If I have a confident opinion on any one point connected with the improvement of the human mind, it is on this.—*Dr. Arnold.*

EDITOR'S RETREAT.

MARCH.

"The stormy March is come at last,
With wind, and cloud, and changing skies;
I hear the rushing of the blast,
That through the valley flies.

"Ah, passing few are they who speak,
Wild, stormy month, in praise of thee!
Yet, though thy winds are loud and bleak,
Thou art a welcome month to me."

Thus sings Bryant of the first month of spring. It is not difficult for the true poet to find beauty in every season and scene—even the dull, gray sky of a November rain, or the long, level stretch of sand which makes the monotony of the desert—for every feature of Nature has some charm to recommend it, and the heart of the poet is keenly alive to its appreciation. We were selfishly pleased when we first saw these lines, because March is our birth-month, and we would fain associate it with something of sweetness and promise, albeit songs were sung in favor of April and May, and the muses frowned upon the first fretful and inconstant child of Spring. In the latitude in which we passed our childish days, this month often was bedecked in the mantle and garland of April. Many are the fragile anemones, the pale, blue violets, and the golden crocuses we have gathered from sunny nooks, beside emerald-fringed and silvery brooks, on bright, delicious days of March, when our wayward feet, weary of winter's thrall, strayed from the "beaten paths" of school out into the meadows and over the hill-sides. And the skies! they are, indeed, "changing," but not always stormy; their blueness is as fresh and deep as the first sweet thrill of love in a youthful heart; and the clouds troop, in graceful throngs, white-robed and golden-winged, through the dreamy azure like doves of heaven floating in dreams of bliss. Yet the poet probably has given expression to the one great charm which it can boast, when he says, "*thou bring'st the hope*:"—the hope and the promise are much, and the bearer should be welcomed as a messenger with good tidings:

"Thou bring'st the hope of those calm skies,
And that soft time of sunny showers,

When the wide bloom, on earth that lies,
Seems of a brighter world than ours."

CONTENTMENT.

"I never complained of my condition," says the Persian poet, Sadi, "but once, when my feet were bare, and I had no money to buy shoes; but I met a man without feet, and was contented with my lot." The sayings of many of these Oriental bards and sages are brief and precious as the tiny vials of otto of roses put up in the same enchanted lands—little packages of perfume, worth more than their weight in gold; or, like golden-belted bees, flying about, laden with more than their own size of honey, which they have sipped from aromatic flowers flaming in the rich sunshine of those eternally calm heavens. It would be strange if *our* poets and philosophers should bundle us up any such tiny packages of wisdom. Yet we stand much more in need of them than the indolent and dreamy Orientals, who can draw contentment out of an opium-pipe as naturally as the sun draws dew out of the flower-chalice. We need rest—peace—repose! we need to ponder all that can be said in favor of contentment; for we are a restless, jealous, and ambitious people, who bring, even to our otherwise happy and prosperous firesides, the spirit of emulation and pride. Yet when we speak of repose, we do not mean that idle and nerveless state of lassitude—that delicious nothingness of body and soul which the lotus-eaters craved: such a life is unworthy the high powers of the Christian character or the full development of the rational mind: we would indicate "the peace that passeth understanding," growing out of duties fulfilled and conscious stability of worth and place, as fruit, corn, and flowers grow silently out of the cultivated soil. Labor should bring repose, as the day brings night; but to the American mind the appreciation of the word seems almost impossible. We do not toil that we may afterward enjoy—but that we may transcend some other worker, or reach to some height which, when attained, is scorned by the restless feet which still toil onward, until their owner perishes, crying,

"Excelsior!" "Excelsior" is a glorious motto to invigorate the lingering heart of youth; but it should not urge him on, to perish in the prime of life amid the rigors of ambitious wintery heights. Such was not the purpose of the All-Father, who appointed the seasons of night and day, of growth and rest, of labor and enjoyment. Contentment! it is a golden word which should be mingled with the other upon "that banner with a strange device."

NOR ALWAYS TOIL.

One of the "aching senses" is the longing, which seizes us at times, to flee away from the whirl of life, and seek some quiet spot where there is no care, no thought of the world; only calm, deep peace. We pursue the rounds of our daily being with mind and nerves strained to their utmost capacity, and it were strange, indeed, if a sense of weariness did not come to win us away from our cares to some sweet nook of repose. But to the sensitive soul, whose hopes are not for the accomplishment of some ambitious scheme, who rather craves for the communion of kindred souls, and longs to be away from the tumult of life, this feverish existence is terrible to endure, and being becomes a constant penance from which death alone seems to offer escape. It is evidence to us, when these high and pure souls so crave for repose, that there is a "dim retreat" beyond the horizon of this day where shall be the fullness of peace, and the soul shall enjoy, in all its boundless capacity for joy, its *natural* life. One of the most beautiful evidences of the immortality within us is this longing, if the emotion was but rightly marked and understood; and when we hear the pure and beautiful of earth pleading for peace—peace! we know truly that it is the voice of the better nature crying for its own.

The world is rough and wild with care—
The people are hurrying to and fro—
We are weary and worn, we sigh with despair—
Where—where shall we go?
Where shall we go to be free from this,
Just for a time to put it by?
Where struggle from out the desperate mass?
Give us rest or else we die!
Is there no spot where violets grow,
Lone, and dim, and silent, and sweet,
Where flowers that lie in the moss below
Perfume our humble, aching feet?

A dim retreat,

Whose very secrecy makes it sweet!
So silent, no sound doth ever come
Of the battling world; only the hum
Of bird wings and the breeze
Sighing its love out to the trees,
As we sigh loves of one another!
To such dim nook in spirit we steal,
Letting the blind world reel;
While we, like children, are lull'd to rest
With the soothing sense of a mother's breast.

The yearning we feel for this repose, arms us with trust that it will be found—if not on earthly hills and dales—at last, in the Golden Land which lies beyond the dimness of mortal sight.

We are not of those who believe the only standard of excellence should consist in the amount of hard and sordid work done. "Labor is worship!"—very true; and so is rest worship. "They also serve who only stand and wait."

FOL-DE-ROL.

The fashion magazines have got so they address little girls as young ladies—"young ladies, from five to ten years of age," says one of them recently; and the class thus formally spoken of, and catered to, no doubt feel their immense importance. We can see, in our mind's eye, the daintily-dressed, graceful, and accomplished little creatures, enacting, with suitable gravity, their parts on the stage of life—that is, on the velvet carpet of mamma's parlor,—no more to be put to blush than mamma herself, regarding with calm scrutiny the dress and manners of the miniature men and women who call upon them. They are already *blazé* in worldly experience; they would be almost as much mortified to be betrayed into enthusiasm, delight, surprise, or astonishment, at any earthly event which might possibly happen, as would mamma's fashionable friends. Poor little things! we admire their elegance, their attainments, their precocity; but we pity them for what they have lost. The lily has been painted, the rose adorned; in place of sweet, unconscious grace and artless joy, there is studied beauty and measured happiness. The drop of dew that glistened in the flower's heart has vanished; and in its place has been fastened a hard, cold, gold-encircled gem, pinned to its proper place. Not that beautiful or fashionable

dress implies a loss of the peculiar charms of childhood; but we know too well, that in the circles where such expression reigns, a thousand other influences are at work, whose fruit is vanity, self-consciousness, pride of position, arrogant criticism, and those sentiments of worldliness to which young souls should be kept strangers.

COMING BACK SOON!

"‘You are coming back soon?’ Coming back! Who ever yet came back and found all things unchanged? Drive up the long-remembered roads, and you will miss here a tree, here a patch of daisies and buttercups, and here an old gray farm-house, which you had fondly hoped would outlast your day and generation. Enter the town which was once a happy village to you, and what do you see? Only a puny little village, with the pleasant walks you used to love turned into ambitious sidewalks, and paved with the roughest of stones; with the old familiar houses and fences remodeled and new painted, till you lose all the old land-marks; with every thing changed, and you, it may be, most of all! Sit down, if you will, in your lonely room; call up the forms of those you loved, who are now scattered far away, and try to people the dusty streets with more beloved faces. Can you succeed? Is it not a poor, pale phantom that you strive to press to your aching heart? Was it wise in you, after all, this ‘coming back?’" So writes somebody, very prettily; and, somehow, nothing we have read for many a day, has had so sad and yet sweet a sound to us. There is so true and so pathetic a thought wrapped up, suggesting more than it can express. One involuntarily falls to musing, and pursues the idea far away into melancholy regions, brooded over by the pale sunlight and purple mist of Indian-summer memory.

Then nothing, nothing upon earth can ever absolutely make up for separation between those who love. They may meet again, as fond, or fonder than ever, but each has suffered an irreparable loss for which nothing in the future can atone. Each has changed, and when they meet, they are not, and can not be, what they were when they parted. One has slept when the other wak-

ened, laughed when the other wept, wept when the other laughed—the bond of sympathy has been broken, and the gap must forever remain. "Long absence," says a writer, "like a great misfortune, has in itself a reconciling power." And the Creator has mercifully so fashioned our hearts, that this is true; but it is also true that, like a great misfortune, it leaves its ineffaceable scar.

It is not always the scene and the person whom we return to meet that have changed, so much as it is our own perception of them which is altered; and this makes another thing to be dreaded in long absence. The "daisies and buttercups, the old gray farm-house," are even as you left them, but you gaze upon them with different eyes. The face of the one you love has not altered, but you see it in a different light—its relations to you are not the same. Therefore do the long partings of parents and children, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, seem to us sadder than the death-bed farewell—a pain, a risk, which should not be lightly incurred.

A man tears away the clinging tendrils of his heart from the soil of home, goes far away, transports them to a foreign soil, where, after drooping and sickly years, they become acclimated, and flourish, perhaps as vigorously as ever; but they are not the same bloom of the soul, and will have a strange look to the eyes at home, which have grieved after them, if they ever return. He may go away empty-handed, and come back with the golden bowl of fortune in his grasp, but the power to enjoy the draught may have perished, and all that would have made it sweet be turned into bitterness, so that he has lost more than he has gained.

"What matters it if a man gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" There are many soul-losses besides that fatal one here referred to—losses which no earthly prosperity ever can make up—losses more melancholy than any wreck of material fortunes—and it is these losses which make "coming back!" so sad a thing.

O, thou that dost inhabit in my breast,
Leave not the mansion so long tenantless;
Lest, growing ruinous, the building fall,
And leave no memory of what it was.

HOME HINTS AND HELPS.

IT has been well and often said that the influences of a happy childhood are a shield to a man in the after-temptations of life, and an inducement to him to perform his duties faithfully. It is believed that a mother's prayer is often answered, long after the heart from which it exhaled has become dust, and scarcely a trace of humanity remained in the reckless child for whom it was breathed. Too much has not been said, and too much importance can not be given to these influences. But that they may have their full power, the home must be a *happy one*—remembered as such by the yearning affections of the grown-up heart—not thought of with bitter recollections of harsh words, ready blame, and undeserved severity. There should be *sympathy* between parents and children. And the mother is not the sole person upon whom this responsibility rests. Too many fathers think they are doing their whole duty to their families, because they spend their days in toil for them; and take no pains to impress upon the clinging, sensitive spirits which turn to them for love, as naturally as the sunflower turns to the sun for light, that this labor is one of affection. The following remarks, made by an English writer, repeat our sentiments upon this subject better than we could express them ourself; every word is as true as it is forcible; and we wish all fathers who need the advice therein contained, were obliged to hear it read by the gentle voice of some beloved wife, every day, for a year:

"The father who plunges into business so deeply that he has no leisure for domestic duties and pleasures, and whose only intercourse with his children consists in a brief word of authority, or a surly lamentation over their intolerable expensiveness, is equally to be pitied and to be blamed. What right has he to devote to other pursuits the time which God has allotted to his children? Nor is it an excuse to say that he can not support his family in their present style of living without this effort. I ask, by what right can his family demand to live in a manner which requires him to neglect his

most solemn and important duties? Nor is it an excuse to say that he wishes to leave them a competence. Is he under obligations to leave them that competence which he desires? Is it an advantage to be relieved from the necessity of labor? Besides, is money the only desirable bequest which a father can leave to his children? Surely, well-cultivated intellects; hearts sensible to domestic affection, the love of parents, of brothers and sisters; a taste for home pleasures; habits of order, regularity, and industry; hatred of vice and vicious men, and a lively sensibility to the excellence of virtue, are as valuable a legacy as an inheritance of property, simple property, purchased by the loss of every habit which would render that property a blessing."

Another thing to be considered in the diffusion of that social atmosphere which is the life of home, is the intelligence as well as the domestic qualities of the mother. There has been a great inconsistency in the good advice so freely lavished upon woman by the other sex—and their own, too, for that matter. It seems to have been the general impression that a woman of high education, brilliant accomplishments, superior powers of conversation, and especially a literary woman, could not make a good wife, mother, and housekeeper,—as if there were something conflicting in the association of intelligence and good-sense with the high duties of a parent and even the common excellencies required in domestic labors. Now we believe that "a soul occupied with great ideas, best performs small duties;" and we feel our sex degraded by the narrow and petty remarks made upon silence; ignorance and superstition being the qualities most commendatory of those whom these same egotistical cavers expect to be angels of forbearance, humility, love, and feminine wisdom. We have never found that ignorance improved the temper of a woman; that a mean mind fitted her better to shine as a light to her household; that the absence of all noble ambition and subjects of thought and reflection proved necessarily the existence of certain traits of gentleness, generosity, and

goodness so desirable to possess. On the contrary, we have observed that scandal, gossip, ill-temper, cowardice, and the indolence which wait upon a vacant mind, were very apt to be the occupants of a breast filled with no high aims in life, unconscious of the greatness of its moral duties as a wife, mother, and friend. We have sometimes thought it even better to be a regular *blue-stocking* than to have no aim in life but a new dress, or a visit to a set of gossiping and frivolous-natured acquaintances. "The trivial services of social life are the best performed, and the lesser particles of domestic happiness are most skillfully organized by the deepest and fairest heart." When the father grows more in tenderness and sympathy, and the mother more in thought and culture, then the children will feel more deeply the holy influences of the happy home;

"Then reigns the world's great bridals, chaste and calm,

Then springs the crowning grace of human-kind."

[We didn't intend to quote Tennyson in this department, but since we have, we will follow it up with useful information for washerwomen, to keep the feminine balance duly adjusted!]

The washerwomen of Holland and Belgium, so proverbial for their neatness, and who get up their linen so beautifully white, use refined borax as a washing-powder instead of soda, in the proportion of a large handful of borax powder to about ten gallons of boiling water; they save in soap nearly one half. All large washing establishments adopt the same mode. For laces, cambrics, etc., an extra quantity of the same powder is used, and for crinolines (requiring to be made very stiff) a strong solution is necessary. Borax being a neutral salt, does not in the slightest degree injure the texture of the linen; its effect is to soften the hardest water, and, therefore, it should be kept on every toilet table. To the taste it is rather sweet, is used for cleaning the hair, is an excellent dentrifice, and, in hot countries, is used in combination with tartaric acid and bi-carbonate of soda as a cooling beverage. (Good tea can not be made with hard water;

all water may be made soft by adding a tea-spoonful of borax powder to an ordinary-sized kettle of water, in which it should boil. The saving in the quantity of tea used, will be at least one fifth. To give to black tea the flavoring of green tea, add a single leaf from the black-currant bush.

LOAF OF TEA CAKE.—One cup sour milk; one cup sugar; one tea-spoonful rose water; a little nutmeg; one table-spoonful of butter; one tea-spoonful of soda; two and a half cups flour.

DEBORAH'S BATTER PUDDING.—Sixteen table-spoonfuls of flour; one quart of milk; six eggs; salt; beat the eggs to a froth on a plate, and after it is mixed beat it fifteen minutes. Either boil or bake.

NEWTON SHORT GINGERBREAD.—Eight cups flour; three cups sugar; one of ginger; one of butter; six eggs; one tea-spoonful of soda.

SALEM COOKIES.—Three and a half pounds of flour; one and a half of sugar; one of butter; one tea-spoonful of caraway seeds; one and a half cups of milk; half tea-spoonful of soda.

SODA SOAP.—To two bars of Windsor soap, add two pounds of soda that is used for washing, and twenty quarts of water. Boil it twenty minutes.

A NEW PUDDING.—One quart of milk; half a pound of flour; half a pound of butter. Melt the butter in one pint of the milk—mix the flour in the other pint. Two table-spoonfuls of rice boiled soft, mix all together, add seven eggs beaten to a froth, baked three quarters of an hour. Sauce for the pudding: one glass of wine; one of brandy; one of rose water; one of water; one pint bowl of sugar; one egg; one cup of butter. Let it boil up at once.

PLUM PUDDING.—One stale brick loaf; take off the brown crust; cut it in slices, and spread them with butter. Pour over it one quart of boiled milk, and let it stand until morning. Grate in one nutmeg; one tea-spoonful of salt; eight eggs well-beaten; a pint bowl of stoned raisins; flour the raisins, and bake two hours. To be baked immediately after putting in the raisins and eggs.

EDITOR'S TABLE.

NEW York has on her least inviting aspect at this present writing. "Metropolitan Slush," as it is expressively designated, being a most widely-disseminated profuse and characteristic combination of water, snow, mud, soot, and debris generally. Broadway is absolutely dreary, notwithstanding its bespattered crowds. The windows of "jobbing-houses" are crowded with "spring styles," which have not yet made their appearance at the counters of the retailers, who are "pushing off" the remains of their winter stocks. We see nothing remarkably new for ladies, except the dress-trimmings called "the Ruben's Dahlia," in the manufacture of which the india-rubber men seem to have an interest.

We overheard a silk-importer remarking that the silk manufacturers were bringing out no *new* designs, as the market would not warrant it. We were puzzled to understand why the silk market should not be "active," for rich and elegant silks were never so *widely* worn, by all classes, and surely never were so much required in the making of a garment. Crinoline continues to expand, without the least prospect of any present diminution. Sleeves are following, *en suite*, until the rumor that *thirty* yards will soon be required for a single robe, is likely to be verified.

The frightful state of the pavements in Broadway, has, at least, brought out two or three indications of good-sense among feminine pedestrians, which proves that useful quality is not entirely dead from neglect. Instead of the immodest and untidy spectacle of a dress held frightfully high, a quantity of soiled white skirts, and a pair of well-soaked gaiters, suggestive of influenza and consumption, we now very frequently behold the outer dress securely looped up by long pins styled "pages;" the under garment, one of those brilliant and picturesque "Balmoral" petticoats, made of a proper length, and combining comfort, neatness, and *effect*; and upon the feet, calf-skin or india-rubber boots, made, in every way, as serviceable as men's.

— We learn, from the gossip of "foreign correspondents," that the Emperor of France gives a weekly reception to his functionaries and their families, to which all invited *must* attend, and *must not* wear the same dress twice, and *must* have their jewels re-set for each and every occasion! Well! we ought to be thankful that we live in a republican country; although, to be sure, not a few of our fair countrywomen are fully as much the slaves of fashion, as any French belle ever can be to an emperor's caprice. And we are not certain but some of these same would like as good an excuse for running up a bill at Tiffany's or Stewart's.

— It certainly is tempting to the feminine fancy and affections to step into Tiffany's, and linger over the lustrous display of pearls and jewels which flash their magnificence through the plate-glass of his show-cases. However, one can tear themselves away, and forget it, when they think of a home to be secured, and an education to be given to the little ones; and if they be not *rich*, can find a truer pleasure in self-sacrifice than any diamonds ever bestowed.

— In the great world of this metropolis, there is always something craving attention—some work of art, or triumph of intellect, almost *demanding* a portion of our love and time. We have lately had a rare treat in the eloquent lectures of Professor Mitchell, upon astronomy; a science so beautiful, so more than sublime, and in which such rapid and astonishing developments are being made, that the imagination is bewildered, and the mind excited to the limit of its capabilities. These lectures have attracted immense audiences, showing a great improvement in popular taste. The lectures are being printed in cheap form for general perusal, which should be good news for those not within the possibility of hearing the brilliant lecturer.

— Conspicuous among the works of art are—"The Empress Eugenie, and the Ladies of her Court," painted from the life, by Winterhalter, one of the first portrait painters of

the age. Curiosity, as much as a love of art, takes numbers to gaze upon this picture. It is exhibited at Goupil's. Quite recently another exquisite thing has been placed in the same gallery. It is Gignoux's "Falls of Niagara by Moonlight," pronounced by critics to be a success; which is saying much, when we remember the subject treated. It has been purchased by Mr. Belmont, and placed on exhibition for the benefit of the poor, previously to being removed to his private gallery.

—We notice that there is a genuine ambrotype of that lovely woman and noble poetess, Mrs. Browning, to be seen at Brady's, though we have not yet found time to visit it. Exact copies are furnished at a reasonable sum.

— "Little Ella," the infant wonder, is exciting admiration and remark. She is so lovely in person, so innocent in manner, and performs her part with such simplicity, and evident absence of constraint or painful training, that the most conscientious condemner of "precocious children"—or condemner, rather, of those who foster this precociousness—can not but gaze upon her with pleasure and love. She wins the hearts of her audiences; and all her hearers, especially those who are parents, can not but pray that she may not be like some sweet flowers which blossom so early in the spring only to be blighted by the snow of an early decay.

—In "Home Hits and Hints," a work just published by our friend, Wm. T. Coggeshall, we find many good things for the children. Here is one pretty little "child's saying," so brief that we can give it place: "A little girl, whose development is precious to us, was called out into the yard, just at day-break, to see the moon, which, nearly full, was shining in an unclouded sky. What is called 'the man in the moon' was unusually distinct. The morning was calm, and the child delighted; but she asked no questions—made no remarks. The following day, she was rocking herself before the fire, when suddenly the motion of her chair was stopped, and looking up, with a glance of thoughtful inquiry, she said:

"Pa, what was that I saw in the moon

yesterday morning?' We explained to her, as well as we knew how, what astronomers supposed 'the man in the moon' to be. She was evidently disappointed. Her head dropped, and in a sad tone she said, as if talking to herself, 'Oh! I thought it was God, sitting under a tree, reading a book.'"

—We have received two little poems, of unusual pathos and sweetness, called "The Lamb" and "The Cripple," for which we thank the author; hoping to be the recipient of others from the same gentle pen. We give the latter one in this number, and reserve a nook in our next "Retreat" for the briefest of the two. Amid the great multitude of poems offered, we not unfrequently have to express disappointment that so *very* few should be good.

—The illustrated poem, "Asphodel," which graces this number, is one of those calculated to awaken strong feeling. The illustrations are of a very beautiful character—the two landscapes being from Birket Foster's designs. We may well spare a steel-plate for such beauties. "The Home," in the course of the year, will give many real gems of art in the way of illustrations.

—With contributions especially prepared for this magazine by Mrs. H. L. Bostwick, Mrs. Caroline A. Halbert, Miss Mary J. Crosman, Clara Augusta, Philo Earle Hardy, etc., etc., this March number may be pronounced most attractive. The leading paper on "The Literature of Wedded Love" is one of the finest essays it ever has been our privilege to read.

—The third paper by Dr. Francis is crowded over to the April number. We find that this series of papers is attracting attention. They are prepared with special reference to their practical and useful bearing, avoiding all technicalities of "the profession," or dry dissertation upon sanitary subjects. Such articles must do good.

—Among those filed for insertion, are "As a Little Child;" "Female Development;" "Got the Fever;" "To-Morrow;" "Summer Insects;" "The Clouds;" "Reward of Merit." &c., &c. The paper on the Beauchampe case is under consideration. Several good poems also await their turn.

We can not spare a page to any piece of rhyme except it is more than "passable;" hence, we generally lay aside long poems as "not available." We hope some of our correspondents will bear this in mind.

— A choice steel-plate engraving will be given in our next number, viz: "The April Shower." The publishers design to alternate with steel and first-class wood engravings, and will thus be able to present quite an art gallery during the course of the year.

— Parties proposing to write stories for us, are informed that we can not accept any serial, for the present year at least. Aside from the story "The Wrong Righted," each number of the magazine will be complete in itself. No contribution, therefore, should exceed fifteen ordinary foolscap pages of manuscript, since we should prefer to confine leading articles to about six pages of the magazine. We so state this, in order to avoid writing letters to those parties who are constantly proposing to extend contributions through several numbers of the magazine.

— Even Queen Victoria must *obey* the impulses of her motherly and wifely nature. As sovereign she commands her husband—as a wife she is but a woman and his equal. This is happily illustrated in an anecdote recently related by Mr. Frank D. Lay, in a lecture upon things and persons abroad. He said: "It is reported that her Majesty has a sweet little temper of her own, and that her *eara sposa*, like a prudent man, generally retires before the storm, and locks himself in his private cabinet until the sky is clear, and sunshine again illumines the classic shades of St. James or Windsor. After one of these ebullitions, the Queen gave a threatening knock at the door where Prince Albert had taken refuge, and upon being asked, 'Who's there?' responded, 'The Queen!' 'The Queen can not enter here,' responded the hen-pecked. After the lapse of half an hour, a *gentle tap* was heard upon the door. 'Who's there?' asked Prince Albert. 'Your wife!' responded Victoria. 'My wife is always welcome,' was the gallant reply."

— A Fifth Avenue lady invited a large party of friends on occasion of the first ex-

hibition of a superb painting which her husband had just purchased in Paris. "Io" was the subject. She received her guests with great artistic airs, talked much of the fine arts, etc. The door of the gallery being thrown open, she ushered the expectant crowd into the room. "There!" she exclaimed, "behold the beautiful *Jo*!" Some of the guests had to retire to the dressing-room to laugh off the effects of that introduction to "Jo."

Talking of poor Io, recalls the good thing told by the Hampden Sidney Magazine of a young *graduate* of that estimable institution. He was expatiating largely upon Heathen Mythology, (and, by the way, had no great fondness for Latin or Greek), in the company of some young ladies, when one of them said, "Mr. N. . . ., what became of Io?" "Mercury killed her; I read in my chemistry the other day, *Io died* (Iodide) of *Mercury*."

— We see by announcement that another "Household Book of Poetry" is in course of preparation by Mr. Robert Bonner. The sins of omission and commission which attach to the book recently brought out by the Appletons, edited by Mr. Dana, render another volume almost a necessity. We sincerely hope Mr. Bonner will do the literature and writers of this country more justice than they have met at the hands of the *Tribune* editor.

— The first volume of Allibone's new Critical Dictionary of Authors is soon to issue. It is a very elaborate and pains-taking work, containing, as it will, over thirty thousand biographies and notices of authors! Among the singular facts which the first volume develops are those concerning the number of writers of one name, who have "catered for the public" in one province or another. Mr. Allibone enumerates twenty-one family names that have an aggregate of 1,586 authors. The Joneses are the most numerous of the list, numbering 189 authors; next comes the Browns and the Brownes, with 175 writers; the Clarks and the Clarkes come next, numbering 153; others succeed as follows: Davies and Davis, 116; Johnsons, 110; Hall, 92; Hamilton, 86; Green and Greene, 83; Jackson, 81; Hill, 67; &c.

BOOK NOTICES.

HOME HITS AND HINTS; A Book for the Fireside, by WM. T. COGGESHALL. New York: REDFIELD. 12mo. 404 pages.

We here have a series of stories and graphic sketches well calculated to interest the fireside circle. It is feelingly dedicated to the author's trio of children, and thus, at the outset touches the sympathetic chord of every parent's heart. Many of the stories have had the "run of the papers;" what better evidence can there be of their merit? We recognize "Easy Warren," "Aunt Patience," "Little Peleg," "Widow Cliff and her Son," etc., etc. Those in search of a volume for the edification and profit of their children, can not secure a more truly excellent book. It is printed in the usual neat style of Redfield's publications.

NOTES FROM PLYMOUTH PULPIT; A Collection of Memorable Passages from the Discourses of Henry Ward Beecher, by AUGUSTA MOORE. New York: DERBY & JACKSON. 12mo.

Mr. Beecher is, without doubt, one of the most thoroughly *original* thinkers in this country. He speaks and acts in a peculiar manner. Pointed in sarcasm, strong in argument, unapproachable in wit, full of the sense of beauty, extremely happy in the graces of fancy, he appears to us a kind of Christianized and elaborated John Randolph, with a commingling of Sidney Smith and Hampden in his temperament. The labor of collaborating the thoughts of such a mind is perfectly endless; the flow of mental riches is measured only by the months and years of life. Miss Moore has heard Mr. Beecher in all his moods, and the impulse to reproduce some of the good things which have fallen from his lips, produced this volume. Every page, literally, contains "food for thought." The public would thank author and publishers for one such volume per year.

THE AFTERNOON OF UNMARRIED LIFE. New York: RUDD & CARLETON. 12mo.

This work, though professedly "uniform with 'A Woman's Thoughts about Women,'" is *not* by the same author, Miss Mulock. It is addressed to those in the unmarried es-

tate and in the "Afternoon of Life," which is supposed to mean, on the shady side of thirty-five. There is much in it of a character to create remark by that portion of our female society, since its revelations of thoughts and feelings, its advice and rebukes are characterized by singular plainness. Its tone is thoroughly Christian, earnest, and honest, and it seems to us worthy of a good circulation.

THE LIFE OF BURNS, chiefly by THOMAS CARLYLE, is a seasonable volume, marking the good taste of its editor, O. W. WIGHT, Esq. It embraces not only Carlyle's celebrated essay on the Character and Writings of Burns, but also includes the "Encyclopedia Britannica's" life of the poet, and also the "English Cyclopaedia's" article on Carlyle, introduced gracefully by the remarks of the editor. The whole makes up a treasured volume for the new "Household Library," to which this is the second contribution.

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY for February will commend itself to the best minds of every community. It is marked throughout by authorial ability and editorial sagacity. No magazine yet published in America has attained to a position of such actual intellectual power as now attaches to the "Atlantic." It bids fair for a long life of usefulness.

THE LADIES' REPOSITORY, devoted to Literature and Religion, REV. D. W. CLARK editor, for February, is a perfect repository of the Pure, the Beautiful, and the Good. It is conducted with eminent ability by Dr. Clark; and, in its various departments, is excelled by no monthly offered to the Christian family. A woman who takes, and reads, and enjoys such a magazine, can not be otherwise than a good wife, daughter, or sister. The Repository is always exquisitely illustrated and printed.

[Among the many books received from publishers, we must choose a few only for particular notice, since our space is limited. We shall read all carefully, and endeavor to direct attention to such as we think deserving.]